

Hermippus Redivivus:
OR, THE
SAGE's TRIUMPH
OVER
Old Age and the *Grave*.
WHEREIN A
METHOD
Is laid down for Prolonging
THE
Life and *Vigour* of MAN.
INCLUDING

A COMMENTARY upon an Antient INSCRIPTION, in which this great SECRET is revealed; supported by numerous Authorities.

The whole interspersed
With a great Variety of remarkable and well attested RELATIONS

LONDON:
Printed for J. NOURSE, at the *Lamb*; without *Temple-Bar*. M.DCC.XLVIII.

THE PREFACE.

If Custom had not establish'd a Sort of Necessity of prefixing something of this Kind to whatsoever is sent abroad, the following Sheets might have been safely trusted without a Preface. For, in the first Place, this Book is publish'd, not to excite, but to gratify the Curiosity of the Lovers of Learning, who have enquired after it very diligently, and express'd a great Desire to see by what Arguments Dr. Cohausen *endeavoured to support so extraordinary a System. And, on the other Hand, again, the Book itself is so methodical, and every Thing therein follows so naturally, that the Reader is led in a direct Road from the Beginning to the End; and as he is in no Danger of mistaking his Way, there is the less Occasion for affording him supernumerary Lights in an Introduction like this.*

But, since we have undertaken to write a Preface, it may not be amiss to observe therein, that very few Books contain so great a Variety in so narrow a compass. The Author appears to be a Man of great Reading and deep Reflection, for most of the Books he cites are equally scarce and curious; but then he does not, like many of the German *Authors, content himself with barely embroidering his Margins, which may be sometimes done by transcribing those of other Writers, but generally gives you the Passages that make for his Purpose, and very often Characters of the Authors themselves, and this alone renders his Work*

of

of great Utility to such as desire to be acquainted with the Merit of Books seldom to be met with, and which, on that very Account, are swelled to a high Price.

Another remarkable thing in this Treatise is the Choice the Author has made of his Quotations, which are as entertaining, as they are instructive; nor is it easy to conceive, without reading his Book, how it is possible for a Man to enliven so dry a Subject, as his seems to be, in the Manner he has done. The Extracts he has given from Bacon *the Monk, plainly shew the prodigious Knowlege of that extraordinary Person, who, when all* Europe *was involved in the thickest Mist of Ignorance, seems to have possessed alone such a Treasure of Science as would have rendered him a very considerable Man, even in the most enlightened Ages, and may possibly engage some able Writer to give us such an Abridgement of his Works, as the ingenious and learned Doctor* Shaw *has done of those of Chancellor* Bacon, *and the famous* Boyle, *which if judiciously performed, and illustrated as they are, with proper Notes, would do equal Service to the Republic of Letters, and Honour to our Country.*

The Stories he inserts of Eugenius Philalethes, Signor Gualdi, *and the celebrated* Flamel, *are not only extremely diverting, but may contribute also to the procuring us some well-written History of the Pretenders to the Philosophers Stone; which, as it would be a very curious and entertaining Piece, so if written from good Authorities, and handled in a proper Manner, it might be of considerable Use, since the Number of Operators in that Way has of late Years mightily increased, especially in this Country, where there are many who have given themselves up to that delusive Study, though they endeavour to conceal themselves, and their Labours, with the utmost Secrecy, in order to avoid that Ridicule, which generally attends the Professors of the occult Sciences, In* Germany, *however, this kind of*

Learning is still in Vogue and Credit, and it is scarce possible for any one to obtain a considerable Reputation as a Man of Letters, who has not a Touch at least of Chemistry.

With Respect to the Capital View of our Author, in recommending that Doctrine which he deduces from the Inscription in the Front of his Book, it is certainly managed with great skill and Ingenuity, so that if the Reader should at least reject its Probability, he must be obliged, notwithstanding, to confess, that the Writer has not employed his Pains to little or no Purpose, but has introduced so many curious Enquiries, and thrown out so many valuable Hints, that his Book must be allowed a Performance of great Merit, whatever becomes of Hermippus *and his Secret. Of this, the Author himself seems to be very well aware; and, therefore, while he pushes his Arguments with the greatest Vigour, and appears evidently to have his Design much at Heart, he, notwithstanding, takes all along such Precautions, as are necessary to defend him from the Imputation of being a whimsical, conceited, or pedantic Writer, as almost any other Man would have been thought, who had undertaken such a Task. Upon the whole, there is in this Dissertation such a Mixture of serious Irony, as cannot but afford a very agreeable Entertainment to those who are proper Judges of Subjects of this Kind, and who are inclined to see how far the Strength of human Understanding can support philosophical Truths, against common Notions and vulgar Prejudices.*

Having thus taken the same Liberty with our Author, which he has done with other learned Men, the whole is submitted to the Judgment of the candid Reader, who will, doubtless, retain some Tenderness for the Pains that have been taken for his Amusement, and not pass a harsh Censure on a Piece which, we may boldly say, has nothing in it dogmatical, tedious, or offensive.

Hermippus Redivivus:

OR THE

Art of Preserving YOUTH.

IT was the laudable Custom of the Antients, to perpetuate the Memory of all singular Events, and especially such as in any Degree might be useful to Posterity, by Inscriptions. These had a peculiar Stile, in which three Things were principally regarded; Succinctness, Elegancy and Clearness. It would have been inconvenient, and indeed preposterous, to have drawn such Pieces into a great Length, considering the Places in which they were erected; that is to say, Markets, Temples, or publick Roads; or, the Matter whereon they were inscribed, which was Marble, or some other kind of hard or curious Stone. But, if Brevity was necessary, Beauty was likewise convenient. Where there is nothing striking, the Memory soon loses a Thought. To retain what we are told, we must receive at once both Pleasure and Instruction. This Neatness of Stile, was peculiarly cultivated by the Antients. It came originally from the *East*, where all Science was taught in Parables and Proverbs. In *Greece*, they refined upon this, and laid down the Rudiments of Knowledge in Aphorisms. Amongst the *Romans*, this Manner of teaching was much esteemed, and nothing more admired, e-

ven in the politeſt Ages, than Sentences. If they were afterwards abuſed, and improperly applied, this ought not to diſcredit them, ſince without Queſtion they ever did, and always will, appear with the utmoſt Propriety in that kind of Writing of which I am ſpeaking. Laſtly, as to Perſpicuity, the Antients were exceeding careful, and the Difficulties that now ariſe about the true Meaning of ſuch Monuments of their Learning as have reached our Times, are rather owing to the Misfortune of loſing ſuch Accounts of their Cuſtoms and Manners, as might have made them eaſy and familiar to us, than to any want of Clearneſs in the Stile of their Inſcriptions.

Men of different Profeſſions have employed themſelves, with different Views, in the Study of thoſe large and curious Collections, which learned and induſtrious Perſons have made of ſuch Remains of antient Wiſdom, as, having eſcaped Oblivion, are now ſafely repoſited in the Cabinets of the Curious. Amongſt theſe, we are chiefly obliged to the celebrated *Thomas Reineſius*, who undertook to make a Supplement to the laborious Work of *Gruter*, and has therein preſerved an infinite Number of valuable Inſcriptions; and amongſt the reſt, this, which hath given Occaſion to my Treatiſe;

ÆSCULAPIO ET SANITATI
L. CLODIUS HERMIPPUS,
QUI VIXIT ANNOS CXV. DIES V.
PUELLARUM ANHELITU,
QUOD ETIAM POST MORTEM
EJUS
NON PARUM MIRANTUR PHYSICI:
JAM POSTERI SIC VITAM DUCITE.

The

The learned *Delechamp* has given us a different Account of this Inſcription; according to him it ſhould be read thus.

L. Clodius Hirpanus
Vixit annos CLV. dies V.
Puerorum halitu refocillatus,
Et educatus (*a*).

The famous *Cujas* gives it us in the following Manner.

L. Clodius Hirpanus
Vixit annos CXV, dies V.
Alitus puerorum anhelitu (*b*).

Theſe various Readings, though it cannot be denied that they affect the Senſe ſtrongly, do not, however, much concern the Subject. The firſt tells us, that *L. Clodius Hermippus* lived one hundred and fifteen Years, and five Days, by the Breath of young Women, which is worthy the Conſideration of Phyſicians and of Poſterity. According to the Commentator upon *Pliny*, the Name of this Long-liver was not *Hermippus*, but *Hirpanus*, and the Date of his Life one hundred and fifty-five Years, and five Days, with this additional Circumſtance, that he did not live by the Breath of young Women, but of young Men. The Lawyer again reduces the Life to the ſame Standard, and contends only, that his Name was *Hirpanus*, and that he received this extraordinary Nouriſhment from the Breath of Youths.

If therefore we take this Inſcription as it ſtands by the Conſent of all theſe Writers, it informs us of a Fact, equally curious and important, *viz.* That a certain Perſon, no Matter whether his Name was *Hermippus*, or

(*a*) In Notis ad L. vii. c. 48. Plinii Natural. Hiſt.
(*b*) Ad Juſtiniani Novel: 5.

Hirpanus,

Hirpanus, reached a very advanced Age by the Use of the Breath of young Women, or of young Men. Now, whether this was a real Fact which actually happened, or whether it be the Invention of some malicious Wit amongst the Antients, in order to exercise the Talents of Posterity, I concern not myself: It appears to me, in the Light of a physical Problem, which may be expressed in very few Words, *viz.* Whether the Breath of young Women may probably contribute to the maintaining long Life, and keeping off old Age? This is what I propose to examine; this is to be the Subject of my Discourse, in which, if what I deliver be entertaining and useful, the Reader need not trouble himself much about the Truth or Falsehood of the Inscription.

But it will be necessary, before we come to the strict Examination of this Proposition, to remove some previous Difficulties out of the Way. In the first Place, therefore, let us enquire, whether the Term of Life be a fixed or moveable Thing. Some of the most learned among the *Jews*, have thought it absolutely determined by the Decree of God, and have alleged various Scriptures for the Proof of this (*c*). The most antient Philosophers, both in *Chaldea* and *Egypt*, thought the Life of Man depended upon the Stars, and by pretending to predict its Duration, plainly shewed, that they thought it absolutely under the Influence of the Heavenly Bodies (*d*). The *Stoicks*, if they meant the Power of the Stars, by what they stiled *Fate*, were also of this Opinion; but whatever they meant by *Fate*, most evident it is, that they thought the Life of Man, as well as every other Thing, depended thereupon (*e*); and that consequently it was unalterable by any Means, within the

(*c*) Manaſ ben Iſrael de term. vitæ. (*d*) Diod. Sicul. Hist. lib. 1. Diogen. Laert. (*e*) Plut. de placit. Philoſoph. Diogen Laert. Senec.

Compaſs

Compaſs of human Power. Now, if there be any Truth in theſe Opinions, if there be the leaſt Foundation for any one of them, the Caſe is clear, that all further Enquiries are vain; for to what end ſhould we ſearch out the moſt probable Means of extending Life, when we are certain, that this is a Thing beyond our Capacity? or, at leaſt, uncertain whether it be or not.

In order to open the Way to further Speculations upon this curious and important Subject, I will begin with the Solution of this Difficulty, and take upon me to prove, that contrary to the Notions of theſe Divines and Philoſophers, there is no ſuch Thing as a ſettled Term of Life by the Law of Nature; or which is the ſame thing in other Words, by the expreſs Will of Divine Providence. In the firſt place, I lay it down as an abſolute Certainty, that Contingency is eſſential to that Mode of Rule purſued by the Divine Power, in the Management of ſublunary Things. Cauſes indeed neceſſarily draw after them their Effects; but then I deny, that there is any Chain of neceſſary Cauſes, and becauſe it would require much Time and Space to eſtabliſh this Doctrine generally, I will keep cloſe to my Subject, and content myſelf with proving it, as to this particular Point. 'It is a thing agreed on all Hands, that the Law of *Moſes* propounded chiefly Temporal Bleſſings, and amongſt theſe, long Life; now this is abſolutely incompatible with the Doctrine of a fixed Term, and therefore if there be any Paſſages in the Scripture which look this way, we muſt interpret them in ſome other Senſe, for the part muſt accord with the whole, and it is idle to alledge a few detach'd Paſſages againſt the Scheme of the whole Book. Again we are told, that God commended *Solomon* for praying to him for Wiſdom, rather than long Life, or for Riches, which plainly ſhews, that he

might

might as well have asked for either, as for it; but if this Inference displeases, take the express Decision of God thereupon; who, in the same Place, says, that if *Solomon* walked in the ways of *David* his Father, he would lengthen his Days (*f*). Add to these Arguments, that it was the constant Practice of the best Men, and such as most intimately knew the Will of God, to pray in Terms irreconcileable to such an absolute Decree. Thus *Hezekiah* desired that his Life might be spared (*g*). *Elias* (*h*) and *Jonah*, that theirs might be shortned (*i*).

But, to put the Matter out of Doubt, one need only consider, the Choice given to *David*, by the Prophet *Nathan* (*k*), of War, Pestilence, or Famine, in consequence of which, he chose Pestilence; now, if there had been a fixed Time of Life, how could this Choice have possibly taken Place? All the Persons who died of the Pestilence, must, according to the Doctrine I am refuting, have died if there had been no Pestilence, because the decreed Term of their Lives was expired. On the whole, therefore, it is apparent, that a fix'd Term of Life is inconsistent with the Reason of Things, which is what we call the Law of Nature, wherein, if I may be allowed the Expression, there is a settled Contingency. It is contrary to the Principles of Religion, as deducible from the natural Light of our Understandings, and it is directly contrary to Revelation, so that I take it for granted, that the most pious Man in the World, that will seriously consider these Arguments, must remain satisfied, that the Order of Providence, the Will of Heaven, or God's Decree, which are the Terms used by the Divines on this Subject, hath determined nothing absolutely, concerning the Term of Life.

I

(*f*) 1. Kings. iii. 11, 14. (*g*) Isaiah, xxxviii. 3. (*h*) 1. Kings, xix, 4. (*i*) Jonah iv, 3. (*k*) 11. Samuel xxiv, 13.

I am next to ſpeak of the Opinions of the Aſtrologers, which of old, were aſcribed to *Eſculapius*, who, it is ſaid, laid down this Maxim, That all Things below, were governed by the Motions and Aſpects of the Stars. Againſt this Notion I have two Things to offer; the firſt is, that they could not poſſibly know this ſo to be, even granting it ſhould be true, becauſe they were abſolutely ignorant of the true Syſtem of the Heavens, and of the Motions of thoſe Bodies, whence they would derive ſo great a Power. This puts their Authority out of the Caſe, for if we cannot depend upon them as Aſtronomers, nothing in Nature can be more ridiculous than to pretend to lay any ſtreſs on their Judgment in Aſtrology. To be convinced of this, we need only conſult the authentick Accounts we have in antient Authors of the *Chaldaic* Syſtem (*l*), from whence it appears to be equally falſe and abſurd; falſe, as it is repugnant to the Experience and Obſervation of ſucceeding Times; and abſurd, as it is contrary to the unalterable Principles of Reaſon and true Science. The other Argument I allege is this, That ſince the Authority of the Antients is out of the Caſe, if there be any modern *Stoicks*, who are ſtill of this Opinion, they muſt ſhew us the Grounds of it, and this, not from ſuch Chimerical Notions as are laid down by the pretended Sages in judiciary Aſtrology, but from the ſettled and unqueſtioned Principles of true Philoſophy. When they do this, or at leaſt, when they attempt to do it, it will be Time enough to examine how far this new Syſtem of theirs is rational. In the mean time, I will conclude this Point with that ſettled and moſt reaſonable Maxim of the Civil Law, *That about Things which are not, and about Things which cannot be made appear, there is the ſame Reaſon*; that is, there can be no reaſoning about them, they muſt be conſidered in the ſame Light, ſince nothing can be more idle than

(*l*) Diod. Sicul. lib. i. Stanley's Chaldaick Philoſophy.

than to dispute about the Consequences of a Thing, before the Thing is made manifest, or we have any real Ground for a Dispute.

We have now done somewhat towards establishing the Foundation of our Doctrine; but there is still another vulgar Notion in our Way, which must be removed; or to speak more properly, explained. By this I mean the prevailing Opinion that the Life of Man is limited to a certain Term, and because we see People grow old at a certain Age, by which I mean grow infirm and decrepit; for Oldness has not so much Reference to Time, as to Condition; and I account him old, who has lost his Strength, rather than one who is advanced in Years. But, because I say the Maladies that attend old Age come on in most People at a certain Period, they are held to be necessary; and if there were any Truth in this, we should be stop'd again, here would be a new Barrier through which we should be able to find no Passage, and when we talked of retarding old Age, People would expect we should make them young again. It is requisite, therefore, that this Matter be explained, and set right, and that the Reader be satisfied how far the Incommodities of old Age are of Necessity, and how far the Product of natural Causes, which may be affected by the Skill and Art of Man.

The human Body is a Machine, actuated by an immortal Spirit, and which is more to my Purpose, fabricated by an Almighty Hand. It cannot be supposed, that this Dwelling should be so slightly, or so injudiciously contrived, as that it should wear out in a very short Space of Time. This does not seem very agreeable, either to the Nature of Man, considered as a rational Creature, or with that infinite Skill and Wisdom which is evident in the Composition of the human Frame. When therefore the Divines say, that *Sin* introduced *Death*,

they

they ſeem to ſpeak philoſophically; and if I may be allowed to explain their Meaning, I ſhould be inclined to ſay, that Diſeaſes and Death are not incident to the human Body by the Will of God, or, which is the ſame Thing, by the Law of Nature, but were ſuperinduced by the Follies and Vices of Men, which carry in them naturally the Seeds of Death; and therefore, if it be an Evil, we ought not to accuſe Providence, but our ſelves. Yet I will readily acknowlege, that taking Things as they now ſtand, and have ſtood for many Ages paſt, there is no Hope left of Immortality in this Body, or even of prolonging our Lives to three or five hundred Years; but ſtill I affirm, that there are no ſettled Periods in Nature, no inevitable Laws which conjoin Weakneſs and Infirmity with a certain Number of Years; but that it is very poſſible, nay, and very practicable too, for a Man to extend the Length of his Life, much beyond the common Date, and that without feeling the Incommodities of Age; for otherwiſe, this would be rather avoiding Death, than preſerving Life.

To prove this, I ſhall firſt make uſe of Reaſon, and next of Experience: I ſhall make it evident by Arguments, that it may be ſo, and by Inſtances, that it has been ſo; and then if any Sceptic has a Mind to doubt the Truth of my Doctrine, I ſhall leave him in his own Road, where his Ignorance will infallibly bring upon him the juſt Puniſhment of his Obſtinacy, an haſtier Extinction of Life than he need otherwiſe have ſuffered.

All wiſe Men have agreed, that Nature, by which I mean the Wiſdom of God manifeſted in the Order of all Things, acts uniformly in every Reſpect, and aſſigns proper Periods to all Things. *Solomon* ſays, *There is a Time to be born, and a Time to die* (m); a ſhort Maxim, which may admit of a long Commentary. The Life of

 Man

(m) Eccleſ. iii. 2.

Man does not certainly consist in Eating and Drinking, in Waking or Sleeping, or in the indulging by turns the Gratifications of his many Appetites; for if this was so, the usual Term of Life would certainly be long enough, and there have been actually Instances of People who have been so satiated with the round of these trivial Actions, as to be weary of Life, before Death was at Hand; and in Consequence of this Weariness, have hastened it. But as the Divine old Man justly observes, *Art is long, and Life is short* (*n*); that is, there seems to be no just Proportion between the Powers of the Mind, and the Force of the Body. We hurry on from Infancy to Childhood; from Childhood to the Age of Man; from thence, to what is stiled middle-aged, and then we decline apace into Feebleness, Misery and Dotage. Can any Man think that this is the true Order of Nature? Has Nature given so many Years to Pikes, to Eagles, and to Stags, nay, and to Serpents, at the same Time that she denies it to Man? Be it far from us to believe this; let us rather stifle our Pride and Conceitedness, and believe that the shortness of Life flows from the Weakness and Wickedness, of Man,

But it will be said, that Death is not only the End of Diseases, but that old Age is as much a Disease as any other, and certainly brings it on. That the human Frame is so constituted as not only to encrease and arrive at Perfection, but to decay also, and wear out. That the Flame of Life grows after a certain Time weaker and weaker; that the Solids lose their Tone by Degrees, and that the Vessels grow cartelaginous, and become at last Boney; so that Death, by old Age, is a natural Thing (*o*). Be it so, I am not contending that Men

(*n*) Vita brevis, ars longa, occasio celeris, experimentum periculosum, judicium difficile, Hippocrat. Aphorism. I.

(*o*) Boerhaave, Institut Medic. Sect. 474, 475, 1053, 1054.

Men may live for ever, or that they may live as I said before, three or five hundred Years; but this I say, that old Age is the only Disease to which we are subject by Nature; and that from this, it is very possible, Men may be much longer defended than they usually are by the help of Art. This I say, principally on the Grounds I have before laid down, viz. That the human Body is a Machine admirably contrived; from whence, I infer that it may, with due Care, be kept in good Order, and that the true Ends of Life, being such as require a much greater Extent of Time, than the ordinary Period of Life, allows; therefore it is more likely, that this unreasonable Brevity should be the Effect of our Want of Skill, of Care, or of Attention, than owing to any Law laid down by the omniscient Author of all Things. These are my Principles; which I submit to the strictest Examination, if they can be demonstrated to be either false or precarious, I shall be sorry for myself and for Mankind; since undoubtedly they carry in them a strong Appearance of Truth, and of the most pleasing Kind of Truth, that which attributes Glory to God, by displaying his good Will to Man. But least any one should say, that many Things look fair in Speculation, which deceive us in the Practice, I will, after thus exposing my Doctrines to the Rays of Reason, examine it next by the reflected Light of Experience, and surely, if this shews us no Flaws in it, the Reader and I shall proceed chearfully on our Journey, and he will no longer consider me as one amusing him with a learned Paradox, but as the Unfolder of a great and useful Truth.

Against the common Opinion, the most authentic Records of History enable me to allege, that though vulgar Experience be opposite to my Notions, yet that shortness of human Life, which is now become common, was not so always, nor is yet so in all Places. I shall

not dwell long on what is ſaid of the great Age of the Antidiluvian Patriarchs, I ſhall content myſelf only with a few Obſervations that are neceſſary to my Purpoſe, the Truth of which cannot be drawn into Diſpute. In the firſt Place, let it be noted, that though Men lived to be then very old, yet the Species was new. The human Body had been but lately taken out of the Earth by it's Creator, and retained therefore a great deal of its primitive Strength. We ſay commonly in our Days, that a Man who lives faſt, takes Pains to deſtroy his Conſtitution; and on the Principles of *Moſes*, we cannot but allow, that the Fabric of *Adam*'s Body muſt have been much ſtronger, and better compacted than ours; and this it was that preſerved him ſo long after he had loſt that Tree of Life, or Rule of Living which was ſuited to his primitive State. My ſecond Obſervation is, that theſe Patriarchs lived in another World; I mean a World otherwiſe conſtituted than ours, and after another Manner; and therefore, what we are told of their Age, is not more incredible, than a Multitude of Facts which Experience and Evidence oblige us to believe true (*p*). I thirdly obſerve, that, if with ſtronger Conſtitutions, and in a better diſpoſed World, Men lived to various Ages, but moſt of them nine or ten Times as long as we; there ſeems to be no repugnancy in admitting, that by great Care of our Conſtitutions, and our helping by Art the noxious Qualities of the ſeveral Elements as they are now diſpoſed, Men may maintain as great a Diſtinction in the Periods of their Lives or Deaths.

It is very remarkable, that not only the Sacred Writers, but all the antient *Chaldean*, *Egyptian*, and *Chineſe* Authors, ſpeak of the great Ages of ſuch as lived in early Times, and this with ſuch Confidence, that *Xeno-*

(*p*) Burnet Theor. Tellur. Cudworth Syſtem. Intellect.

Xenophon, *Pliny*, and other judicious Perſons, receive their Teſtimony without Scruple. But to come down to later Times, *Attila* King of the *Huns*, who reigned in the fifth Century, lived to 124, and then died of Exceſs the firſt Night of his ſecond Nuptials, with one of the moſt beautiful Princeſſes of that Age (*q*). *Piastus*, King of *Poland*, who, from the Rank of a Peaſant, was raiſed to that of a Prince, in the Year 824, lived to be 120, and governed his Subjects with ſuch Ability to the very laſt, that his Name is ſtill in the higheſt Veneration amongſt his Countrymen (*r*). *Marcus Valerius Corvinus*, a *Roman* Conſul, was celebrated as a true Patriot, and a moſt excellent Perſon in private Life, by the elder *Cato*, and yet *Corvinus* was then upwards of 100 (*s*). *Hippocrates*, the beſt of Phyſicians, lived to 104 (*t*): But *Aſclepiades*, a *Perſian* Phyſician, reached 150 (*u*). *Galen* lived in undiſturbed Health to 104 (*w*). Theſe Men do Honour to their Profeſſion. *Sophocles*, the Tragick Poet, lived to 130 (*x*). *Democritus*, the Philoſopher, lived to 104 (*y*); and *Euphranor* taught his Scholars at upwards of 100 (*z*): and yet, what are theſe to *Epimenides* of *Crete*? who, according to *Theopompus*, an unblemiſhed Hiſtorian, lived to upwards of 157 (*a*). I mention theſe, becauſe if there be any Truth or Security in Hiſtory, we may rely as firmly on the Facts recorded of them, as on any Facts

(*q*) Priſcus apud Jornandes. Bonfinius Hiſtoire de Hongrie, Decade premiere l. ii. p. 75. (*r*) Guagnini rerum Polon. p. 64. Herbert de Fulſtin. lib. 1. p. 13, et Harchnoch, lib. i. cap. 2. p. 68, &c. (*s*) Cato de re Ruſtica, Cicer. de Senectut. Plin. Hiſtor. Natural. lib. vii. (*t*) Euſeb. Chronic. Petav. Rationar. Tempor. Tom. i. p. 96. (*u*) Plin. Hiſtor. Natural. lib. vii. c. 14. (*w*) Fulgos. lib. viii. c. 14. p. 1096. (*x*) Euſeb. Chronic. (*y*) Petav. Rationar. Tempor. Tom. i. p. 96. (*z*) Plin. Hiſtor. Natural. lib. vii. cap. 14. (*a*) Diogen. Laert. in vit. Epimen.

Facts whatever; and consequently, we have the strongest Assurance, that even an hundred, or an hundred and twenty, is not the utmost Limit of human Life.

But what is still more to our Purpose, it is not this, or that Country, in which such aged Persons are to be found; we meet with them in many, I was going to say, in most Climates. We have it on good Authority, that in *Bengal*, there lived a certain Peasant, who reached the Age of 335; and having received Alms of many Infidel Princes, had his Pension continued to him by the *Portugueze* (*b*) in *Cambaja*. *Pliny* gives us an Account, that in the City of *Parma*, there were two of 130 Years of Age, three of 120, at a certain Taxation, or rather Visitation, and in many Cities of *Italy*, People much older, particularly at *Ariminium*, one *Marcus Apponius*, who was 150 (*c*). *Vincent Coquelin*, a Clergyman, died at *Paris* in 1664; at 112 (*d*). *Laurence Hutland*, lived in the *Orkneys* to 170 (*e*). *James Sands*, an *Englishman*, towards the latter End of the last Century, died at 140, and his Wife at 120 (*f*). In *Sweden* it is a common Thing to meet with People of above an hundred, and *Rudbekius* affirms, from Bills of Mortality, signed by his Brother, who was a Bishop, that in the small Extent of twelve Parishes, there died in the Space of thirty-seven Years, 232 Men, between 100 and 140 Years of Age (*g*); which is the more credible, since in the Diet, assembled by the late Queen of *Sweden*, in 1713, the boldest and best Speaker among the Deputies, from the Order of Peasants, was considerably above an hundred (*h*). These Accounts, how-

(*b*) Barthol. Hist. Anat. Cent. v. Hist. 28. p. 46. (*c*) Plin. Histor. Natural. lib. vii. c. 29. (*d*) Memoir. de Paris, p. 197. (*e*) Buchan. Hist. Scot. (*f*) Hakewill's Apol. lib. iii. c. 1. p. 166. (*g*) Ol. Rudbek. Atlantic, p. 196. (*h*) Memoir. Histor. 1713. Tom. ii. p. 336.

however, are far ſhort of what might be produced from *Africa*, and *North America*. But I confine myſelf to ſuch Accounts, as are truly authentic, and I aſſemble theſe Inſtances, not to ſhew my own Learning, or to gratify my Reader's Curioſity, but with a View to ſatiſfy him, that as the Fact is certain, Men may far tranſcend what are eſteemed the common Bounds of Life, ſo this Bleſſing of Longevity is not confined to one Climate or Region, and therefore we need not diſpair of finding out the Art of prolonging Life, and keeping off the Decays of old Age in any Country.

It may be perhaps, notwithſtanding all I have ſaid, ſuggeſted, that in ſuch a Caſe as this, which concerned Mankind in general ſo much, and in which every Man would naturally think himſelf ſo much intereſted, if the Thing were at all poſſible, this Art muſt have been long ago found out, eſpecially, ſince in all Ages there have been a Race of Men, *viz.* Phyſicians, whoſe Buſineſs it particularly was, to ſtudy ſuch Diſcoveries. To this I anſwer, that ſuch Prejudices as theſe, are the greateſt Bars to Science, that many uſeful Arts are but of very late Invention; and that if this was diſcovered heretofore, it might be concealed from Poſterity for very many Reaſons. But beſides, the Fact is quite the contrary; this Art was avowedly ſtudiouſly ſought by the Antients, and ſome of them are ſaid to have diſcovered it. *Aſclepiades* the *Perſian*, whom I have mentioned already, was wont to declare, he accounted a Phyſician ignorant of his Profeſſion who could not defend himſelf from Diſeaſes; and this Notion he ſupported by his own Example, having lived in the full Enjoyment of Health 150 Years, and was then unfortunately killed by a Fall down Stairs (*i*). *Mithridates*, King of *Pontus*, pretended alſo to this Secret, and ſo did many others. But the

(*i*) Sab. bel. lib. x. c. 8. p. 69.

the beſt Anſwer that can be given to all Scruples of this kind may be found in the following Paſſage from BACON, a famous *Engliſh* Monk, who lived in the 13th Century, who thus diſcourſes on the Subject.

" That it is poſſible to prolong Life, *ſays he*, may " thus be made evident. By Nature Man is immor- " tal, that is to ſay, was ſo formed originally, as that " he might have eſcaped dying; and, even after he " had ſinn'd, he could live a thouſand Years; in Pro- " ceſs of Time, by little and little, the Length of his " Life was abbreviated. Therefore it muſt needs be, " that this Abbreviation is accidental, and may conſe- " quently be either wholly repair'd, or at leaſt in Part. " But if we would but make Enquiry into the acciden- " tal Cauſe of this Corruption, we ſhould find it nei- " ther from Heaven, nor from ought but want of a Re- " gimen of Health. For in as much as the Fathers are " corrupt, they beget Children of a corrupt Complexion " and Compoſition; and their Children, from the ſame " Cauſe, are corrupt themſelves, and ſo Corruption is " derived from Father to Son, till Abbreviation of Life " prevails by Succeſſion. Yet for all this, it does not " follow, that it ſhall always be cut ſhorter and ſhorter, " becauſe a Term is ſet in human Kind, that Men " ſhould at the moſt of their Years arrive at fourſcore; " but more is their Regimen, which conſiſts in theſe " Things, Meat and Drink, Sleep and Waking, Mo- " tion and Reſt, Evacuation and Retention, Air, and " the Paſſions of the Mind. For if a Man would ob- " ſerve this Regimen from his Nativity, he might live " as long as his Nature aſſumed from his Parents would " permit, and might be led to the utmoſt Term of Na- " ture, lapſed from original Righteouſneſs; which Term " nevertheleſs he could not paſs; becauſe this Regi- " men does not avail in the leaſt againſt the old Cor-

" ruption

"ruption of our Parents. But it being in a Manner "impossible, that a Man should be so governed in the "Mediocrity of these Things, as this Regimen of Health "requires, it must of Necessity be, that Abbreviation "of Life come from this Cause, and not only from the "Corruption of our Parents.

"Now the Art of Physick determines this Regimen "sufficiently. But neither rich nor poor, wise Men "nor Fools, nor Physicians themselves, how skillful "soever, are able to perfect this Regimen, either in "themselves, or others, as is clear to every Man. But "Nature is not deficient in Necessaries, nor is Art "compleat; yea, it is able to resist and break through "all accidental Passions, so as they may be destroyed, "either altogether, or in Part. And in the Beginning, "when Mens Age began to decline, the Remedy had "been easy; but now, after more than five thousand "Years, it is difficult to appoint a Remedy.

"Nevertheless, wise Men, being moved with the a-"foresaid Considerations, have endeavoured to think "of some Ways, not only against the Defect of every "Mans proper Regimen, but against the Corruption "of our Parents. Not that a Man can be preserved to "the Life of *Adam*, or *Artephius*, because of prevail-"ing Corruption: But, that Life may be prolonged a "Century of Years, or more, beyond the common Age "of Men now living, in that the Infirmities of old "Age might be retarded; and if they could not altoge-"ther be hindered, they might be mitigated, that Life "might usefully be prolonged, yet always on this Side "the utmost Term of Nature. For the utmost Term "of Nature is, that which was placed in the first Man "after Sin, and there is another Term from the Cor-"ruption of every one's own Parents.

"It is no Man's Lot to pass beyond both these Terms, "but one may very possibly overcome the Term of "his proper Corruption. Nor yet do I believe that a-"ny Man, how wise soever, can attain the first Term, "though there be the same Possibility and Aptitude of "human Nature to that Term which was in the first Man. "Nor is it a Wonder, since this Aptitude extends itself "to Immortality, as it was before Sin, and will be after "the Resurrection. But if you say, that neither *Ari-"stotle*, nor *Plato*, nor *Hippocrates*, nor *Galen*, arrived at "such Prolongation: I answer you, nor at many mean "Truths, which were after known to other Students; "and therefore they might be ignorant of these great "Things, although they made their Attempt. But "they busied themselves too much in other Things, "and they were quickly brought to old Age, while "they spent their Lives in worse and common Things, "before they perceived the Ways to the greatest of Se-"crets. For we know that *Aristotle* saith in his Predi-"caments, that the Quadrature of the Circle is possible, "but not then known. And he confesses, that all Men "were ignorant of it even to his Time. But we know, "that, in these our Days, this Truth is known; and "therefore, well might *Aristotle* be ignorant of far "deeper Secrets of Nature. Now also, wise Men are "ignorant of many Things, which in Time to come, "every common Student shall know. Therefore, this "Objection is every Way vain (*k*)."

Such were the Sentiments of this very great and very knowing Man, in Times of the deepest Ignorance and darkest Obscurity; and so throughly was he fixed in these Notions, and had attained so many Lights from the Study of the *Arabian* Writers, or rather of the *Greek* Physicians Labours, digested into the Language

(*k*) Roger. Bacon. de vigore Artis et Naturae.

of

of that Nation, that he afterwards wrote an express Treatise on this Subject (*l*), of which I shall have frequent Occasion to speak, and therein suggested many admirable Precautions for the Preservation of Life, and avoiding the Infirmities of old Age. It is then certain, at least, that we are not pursuing a Shadow, or engaged in a close Search after an empty Chimera; there may be such a Thing as the Art we would reach, and it is not impossible, that the Methods suggested to us by the *Roman* Inscription may be the great Secret. In order to discern the Truth of this, or to speak more correctly, in order to discover how much of Truth there is in it, we ought first of all to examine carefully the Nature of human Breath, what Force it has, and what mighty Feats may be expected from it, since the Inscription tells us, the long-lived *Hermippus* owed his Vivacity to the Nourishment he received from the Breath of Girls, or, if we take in the various Readings of the Inscription, to the Breath of young People of both Sexes.

In order to come to a thorough Knowledge of this Matter, we must consider first what the Breath is, and we shall soon learn, that as Man lives by Breath, so that Breath is nothing more than Air drawn in, and after passing through the Lungs, thrown off again, that we may draw in fresh. I do not tye myself here to physical Terms, or affect a technical Manner of speaking; the Subject on which I write is of general Concern, and I would therefore express myself in a Language that may be generally understood. This Air, when received into our Bodies, according to some Physicians, nourishes the Lamp of Life; but according to all, causes the Circulation of the Blood, and other Juices upon which Health and Life depend. On the other Side, the Air that we respire, and which we commonly call the

(*l*) Roger. Bacon de Prolongatione Vitae, &c.

Breath,

Breath, muſt, by paſſing thro' the Lungs, be ſtrongly tinctured with the Particles of that Body through which it has paſſed, and when it mixes again with the Atmoſphere, muſt communicate certain Qualities which the Air had not before. This is ſo reaſonable, and at the ſame time ſo ſelf evident, that I think it cannot be denied. From hence it follows, that where there are many People in one Room, the Air that is common to them all, muſt be ſtrongly impregnated with their Breaths. If therefore an old Man be for many Hours ſurrounded with young People, we cannot help perceiving, that he muſt take in a great Quantity of that Air which they have reſpired, and which conſequently muſt be loaded with thoſe Particles which it carried off in paſſing through their Lungs.

To judge the better of this Matter, let us conſider firſt the Action of Odours in general upon the human Body; and with regard to this, a very cautious Writer, the *Hippocrates* of our Age, and who will be eſteemed the Father of modern Phyſic by Poſterity, after having explained wherein the Odour of Plants conſiſts, and how exhaled, he then diſcourſes thus. " Hence we may underſtand, " that the various, peculiar, and often ſurprizing Virtue " of Plants, may be widely diffuſed though the Air, and " carried to a vaſt Diſtance by the Winds, ſo that we " muſt not preſently account as Fables, what we find re- " lated in the Hiſtory of Plants, concerning the ſurpriz- " ing Effects of Effluvia, The Shade of the Walnut " gives the Head-ack, and makes the Body coſtive. " The Effluvia of the Poppy procure Sleep. The Va- " pour of the Yew is reputed mortal to thoſe who ſleep " under it; and the Smell of Bean Bloſſoms, if long " continued, diſorders the Senſes. The ſtrong Action " of the Sun upon Plants, certainly raiſes Atmoſpheres " of great Efficacy, by Means of the Spirits it diffuſes;

" and

" and the Motions of the Winds carry them to a Di-
" stance. The dark Shades of thick Woods, where Va-
" pours are contracted, occasion various Diseases, and
" often Death to those who reside among them, as ap-
" pears by melancholy Examples in *America*, which a-
" bounds with poisonous Trees. For this Spirit of
" Plants, is a Thing peculiar to each Species, absolutely
" inimitable, not producible by Art. It has, therefore,
" Virtues peculiar to itself, but such as are strangely
" agreeable to the human Spirits (*m*)."

If the Smell of Vegitables have such high Effects, much stronger surely may be expected from animal Odours; and as to the Effects of human Breath, we know from Experience that they are very extraordinary. It is generally thought, that in the Case of epidemic Diseases, the Infection is propagated by the Breath (*n*), and it is said to have been the Practice of wicked Nurses in the Time of the Plague, to catch the dying Breath of their departing Patients in Lawn Handkerchiefs, for the very worst of Practices; and if human Breath when fetid and corrupt, is so potent, why should we conceive it void of Efficacy, when Persons are in a freest State of Health? Every Body knows how grateful and refreshing we discern the Breath of Cows to be, which is thence supposed exceedingly wholesome; and as the Fragrancy of young Peoples Breath, who are brought up under a proper Regimen, falls little short of this, one may very reasonably suppose, that it partakes of the same Virtues.

Now to apply these Principles to the Matter at present under our Examination. It is, I think, allowed by such as are best acquainted with the Secrets of Nature, that there is a very brisk and lively Motion in the

(*m*) Boerhaave Elementa Chemiae. (*n*) Hodges de Peste. Prosper Alpin. Hist. Natural. Ægypt.

Blood

Blood of young People; to which, according to the Laws of Animal Oecónomy, Health, Vigour, and Growth, are attributed. On the other Hand, a Decay of this lively Motion, and in Conſequence thereof, a ſluggiſh Circulation, which by Degrees ceaſes altogether in the fineſt and ſmalleſt Veſſels, is held to be the principal Cauſe of the Stiffneſs in the Muſcles, which creates that Wearineſs and Want of Force, that is the great Incommodity of old Age. There ſeems therefore to be nothing forced or abſurd, in conceiving that the warm, active, and balſamick Particles thrown off by the Lungs of young People into the Air which they reſpire, may give it ſuch a Quality, as when ſucked in again by a Perſon in Years, ſhall communicate an extraordinary Force to the circulating Humours in his Body, and ſo quicken and enliven them, as to beſtow a Kind of reflective Youthfulneſs, which may for many Years keep off and delay thoſe Infirmities, to which People of the ſame Age are generally ſubject. The more we conſider this Doctrine, the greater Care we take in comparing Cauſes and Effects of the like Nature, and the cloſer we attend to ſuch Experiments as ſeem fitteſt for the clearing up of this Matter, the more we ſhall be ſatisfied of the Truth of this Conjecture, and the more credible this Invention of *Hermippus* will appear.

I am very ſenſible, that there are many vain, ill grounded, and fantaſtic Notions that prevail among idle People, in relation to the Breath; ſome have fancied that Sorcerers have a Power of faſcinating therewith ſuch as they breathe upon, and therefore, in many of the Books which treat of Witchcraft, this is uſually thrown in as a Circumſtance; neither is it a new, but an (*o*) old Piece of Superſtition, which has ſubſiſted in the World many hundred Years before the late Affair in *France*,

(*o*) Pſellus de dæmon.

France, where Miſs *Cadiere* attributes her Poſſeſſion to the Breath of the Prieſt (*p*). We are likeways told of Nations in the *Indies*, who cure all Diſeaſes by breathing on ſuch as are affected with them; but this ought to be no more regarded than what we meet with in *Pliny*, of another *Indian* Nation, who lived towards the Sources of the *Ganges*, who have no Mouths, and who are nouriſhed by ſweet Savours (*q*). Theſe are either abſolute Fictions, or allegorical Accounts, which at this Diſtance of Time, and perhaps when *Pliny* himſelf wrote them, were not underſtood. He gathered moſt of his Facts from the *Greek* Writers, and they frequently diſguiſed, as they ſometimes falſified their Narrations. But theſe Fictions, which every body can diſcern, ought not to prejudice Matters of Fact, of the Truth of which any Enquirer may be ſatisfied.

There are in *Spain* a Race of People, or as ſome Writers ſay, an Order of Knighthood, ſtiled *Salutadores*, who pretend to cure Wounds by breathing on the Patient, and repeating certain Prayers, which they affirm were taught by St. *Elmo* (*r*). The Church of *Rome* has condemned this fanatical Practice, and ſo do I; but there is another ſomewhat related to this, which, whether Nature or Chance firſt introduced into the World, is uncertain, but which is not like ever to wear out; and that is, breathing on People in a Swoon, in order to bring them to themſelves, which is found to be very effectual, as from natural Cauſes might well be expected. Let us then in all Caſes of this Nature diſtinguiſh between Reaſon and Report, vulgar Opinion and the

(*p*) See the ſeveral Factums in that famous Cauſe, in which this Buſineſs of faſcinating by the Breath is largely treated. (*q*) Plin. Hiſtor. Natural. lib. vii. c. 2. Cæl. Rhod. Antiq. Lect. lib. xiv. c. 21. The Name given to this Nation by theſe Authors, is the Aſtomes: (*r*) Delrio Magic. Diſquiſit. v. ii. p. 114.

Senſe

Senſe of capable Judges, the Practices of Mountebanks and Deceivers and Deductions from phyſical Principles by Men of Learning and ſound Senſe. I do not however deny, that popular Remedies have found Admittance into Phyſic, and ought there to be retained; for in Phyſic, as well as in Chemiſtry, the Effects of Medicines are conſidered as Experiments, upon which wiſe Men reaſon, and aſſign the Uſes, though there might be another Sort of People who firſt found them out; it is one Thing to preſcribe rationally, and another to be lucky in Cures. *Hoffman* and *Boerhaave* are the moſt different People in the World from *Paracelſus* and *Van Helmont*, who yet were very extraordinary Men in their Way.

I do not imagine that *Hermippus* by reaſoning found out this Remedy againſt old Age; I am inclined rather to think it found out him, that is to ſay, by vigorous Effects he was led to the Cauſe, and by feeling himſelf revived by this Medicine, taught the Knowledge and Efficacy of it. If one was diſpoſed to purſue the Method of the Antients, and to dreſs up this Story in the Garb which *Plato* would have given it, one might relate it thus.

When the blooming *Thyſbe*, whom the Graces adorn, and the Muſes inſtruct, converſes with the good old *Hermippus*, her Youth invigorates his Age, and the brisk Flame that warms her Heart, communicates its Heat to his: So often as the lovely Virgin breathes, the kindly Vapours fly off full of the lively Spirits that ſwim in her Purple Veins; theſe old *Hermippus* greedily drinks in; and as Spirits quickly attract Spirits, ſo they are preſently mingled with the Blood of the old Man. Thus the Vapour, which but a Moment before was expelled by the brisk beating of the Heart of *Thyſbe*, is communicated by the Æther to *Hermippus*, and paſſing through his

his Heart, ſerves to invigorate his Blood, ſo that almoſt without a Metaphor, we may ſay, the Spirits of *Thysbe* give Life to *Hermippus.* For what is there more eaſy to apprehend, than that the active Spirits of this briſk and blooming Maid, ſhould, when received from the Air, thaw the frozen Juices of her aged Friend, and thereby give them a new Force, and a freer Paſſage; and thus *Hermippus* poſſeſſing at once the Strength his Nature retains, and borrowing freſh Spirits from the lovely *Thysbe*, what Wonder that he, who enjoys two Sorts of Life, ſhould live twice as long as another Man?

Such had been its Appearance, if we had derived this Fact from a *Grecian* Sage, and then perhaps, it had been honoured with numerous Commentaries, and laboured Explications. But the *Romans* were a graver People, they contented themſelves with delivering Truth in the Language of Truth, and thought, that like all great Beauties, ſhe looked beſt in a plain Dreſs.

Hiſtory informs us, that very many who ſpend their Time in the Inſtruction, and of conſequence in the Company of Youth, have lived to great Ages; thus *Gorgias*, the Maſter of *Iſocrates*, and many other eminent Perſons, lived to be 108; the Year before his Death ſomebody demanded in his School, how he had been able to ſupport ſo long the tedious Burden of old Age; the Sophiſt replied, That he regreted nothing he had done, and felt nothing of which he could reaſonably complain: My Youth, ſaid he, cannot accuſe me, nor can I accuſe my old Age (*s*). His Scholar *Iſocrates*, in the 94th Year of his Age, publiſhed a Book, and ſurvived that Publication four Years, in all which Time he betrayed not the leaſt Failure, either in Memory or in Judgment; but as he had long lived, ſo he

(*s*) Plin. Hiſtor. Natural. lib. vii. c. 48. Valer. Max. lib. viii. c. 13.

died with the Reputation of being the most eloquent Man in *Greece* (*t*). *Xenophilus*, an eminent *Pythagorean* Philosopher, taught a numerous Train of Students, till he arrived at the Age of 105, and even then enjoyed a very perfect Health, and yet he left this World before his Abilities left him (*u*). *Nicholas Leonicenus* read the Physic Lectures at *Ferrara*, in the last Age, upwards of 70 Years; and *Languis* tells us, that when he heard him, he was somewhat above 96, and to a Person who asked him, by what Rule he had acquired this green old Age, he answered, by delivering up my Youth chast to my Man's Estate (*w*). *Platerus* tells us, That his Grandfather who exercised the Office of a Præceptor to some young Noblemen, married a Woman of thirty, when he was in the hundred Year of his Age. His Son by this Marriage did not stay like his Father, but took him a Wife when he was twenty; the old Man was in full Health and Spirits at the Wedding, and lived six Years afterwards (*x*). These are Instances very surprising, and seem to argue, that the Company of young People is a great Preservative against old Age.

The celebrated *Lewis Cornaro*, so well known to the World by his elaborate Treatises on the Benefits of a sober Life, amongst other Things that he relates of himself, tells us this, That when he first began his Regimen, he took home eleven little Nephews, all Sons of the same Father and Mother, all fine healthy Children, whom he took the Pains to educate himself; adding, that whenever he came from the Senate, he diverted himself with the innocent Mirth, harmless Sports, and inoffensive Tattle of the Youngsters. Some of the elder of them, says he, entertained me more agreeably. They under-

(*t*) Plutarch in vit. Isocrat. (*u*) Plin. Histor. Natural. lib. vii. c. 50. Valer. Max. ubi supra. (*w*) Melch. Adam. in vit. Germ. Med. p. 141. (*x*) Plateri Observat. lib. i. p. 233, 234.

stand

ſtand Muſic, often play upon the Lute, accompany it with their Voices, and I too, adds he, frequently join my own, which is as clear, as ſtrong, and as ſweet as ever it was. I have likewiſe, ſays he, compoſed a very diverting Comedy, the Scenes of which are diverſified with an inoffenſive Variety of Wit and Humour, that has in it an agreeable Turn of Thought, and Quaintneſs of Expreſſion. Comedy, you know, is generally the Child of Youth, as Tragedy is the Product of old Age. The latter, on Account of its Gravity and Seriouſneſs, befitting more mature Years; whilſt the former, by its Gaiety of Wit and Humour, is more agreeable to Youth. Now, if an Ancient *Greek* Poet, though he was ten Years younger than myſelf, was admired and celebrated for his having wrote a Tragedy, why ſhould I be eſteemed leſs happy, or leſs myſelf, who have compoſed and publiſhed a Comedy? When I am confident, the ſame Poet, tho' he was ten Years younger than I am, yet had not a better Share of Health, or a livelier Imagination (*y*). I make Uſe of the Authors own Words, becauſe *Cornaro* muſt, of all others, have beſt known himſelf, and the very Spirit he ſhews in reciting theſe Things, is a moſt evident Proof of the Strength, Vigour, and Youthfulneſs of his Conſtitution. I will, however, mention another more modern Inſtance.

Francis Secardi Hongo, uſually diſtinguiſhed by the Name of *Huppazoli*, was Conſul for the State of *Venice* in the Iſland of *Scio*, where he died, in the Beginning of 1702, when he was very near 115. This Man was a Native of *Caſal*, in the *Montferrat*. He married in *Scio*, when he was young, and being much addicted to the Fair-Sex, he had in all five Wives, and fifteen or twenty Concubines, all of them young, beautiful Women, by whom he had Forty-nine Sons and Daughters, whom

(*y*) See Cornaro's Benefits of a ſober Life, p. 33.

he

he educated with the utmoſt Tenderneſs, and was conſtantly with them, as much as his Buſineſs would permit.

He was never ſick, his Sight, Hearing, Memory, and Activity were amazing; he walked every Day about eight Miles; his Hair, which was long and graceful, became white by that Time he was Fourſcore, but turned black at an Hundred, as did his Eyebrows and Beard at One hundred and Twelve. At One hundred and Ten he loſt all his Teeth; but the Year before he died, he cut two large ones with great Pain. His Food was generally a few Spoonfuls of Broth, after which he eat ſome little Thing roaſted; his Breakfaſt and Supper, Bread and Fruit; his conſtant Drink, diſtilled Water, without any Addition of Wine, or other ſtrong Liquor, to the very laſt. He was a Man of ſtrict Honour, of great Abilities, of a free, pleaſant, and ſprightly Temper, as we are told by many Travellers, who were all ſtruck with the good Senſe, and good Humour of this polite old Man (z). The Reader will eaſily diſcern, that the Point, upon which I chiefly inſiſt is, his having continually young Company about him, eſpecially young Women; for though neither himſelf, nor, for ought I know, any Body elſe, ever remarked that this might contribute to the lengthening his Life, yet ſo the Fact might be, though unnoticed. It is indeed more for my Purpoſe to collect Accounts like theſe, where there is clear Evidence of the Fact I would eſtabliſh, before the Principle, to which I refer, was ever thought of, than to quote Inſtances of a freſher Date, ſince the Thing might have been in my Head. Theſe are Inſtances that cannot be warp'd; I have cautiouſly cited my Authors, and ſometimes the Words of the People themſelves, ſo that I need not ask where I can force Belief.

(z) Voyages de Tournefort, &c.

I

I will ſuppoſe then of our *Hermippus*, that he was a Tutor or Director of a College of Virgins; for ſince the Inſcription tells us not what he was, we may be allowed all the Freedom of a rational Conjecture. This College of Virgins I conceive to be founded purely for the Sake of Education, and thereby affording a quick and conſtant Succeſſion of little Maids, from the Age of between five and ſix, to thirteen and fourteen. I imagine it might be requiſite for the Health, as well as proper Inſtruction of theſe young Ladies, that they roſe pretty early in the Morning, and this in all Seaſons of the Year. In the Spring and Summer they might be allowed to walk and enjoy the refreſhing Pleaſure of rural Proſpects, but always in the Company of their Director, who ſhould be obliged to entertain them, during the Walk, with ſeaſonable and lively Stories. If this ſeeming extraordinary Mode of Education, diſguſt Perſons of a nice and prudiſh Taſte, give me Leave to obſerve, that the *Greeks* uſed it of old, and that it is ſtill practiſed by all the *Eaſtern* Nations. *Mileſian*, or *Arabian* Tales, in which a Vivacity of Imagination appears, with here and there a Ray of ſound Judgment, ſuit beſt with tender Minds, and eſpecially with feminine Underſtandings. Women are remarkably governed by Example, or, to make uſe of a modern Phraſe, by the Faſhion. Why, therefore, ſhould they not be inſtructed by Example? There is leſs Difference than moſt People imagine between real and feigned Stories. They differ but as morning and evening Shadows, the one is the faint Picture of what has paſſed, the other as lively a Repreſentation of what may poſſibly come. In all other Reſpects they are alike; the Story of *Alexander* and *Roxana* is now as much a Dream as any in the *Perſian* Tales. One Advantage that ideal Relations have over Stories grounded on Facts, is, that we may contrive them ſo as to avoid

void improper Circumſtances, which cannot frequently be done with reſpect to the latter, but at the Expence of Truth. With ſuch Diſcourſes, after their early Devotions were over, the fair Pupils might be entertained in Winter Mornings, and the Day be thus opened with a free, chearful, and kindly Spirit, alike agreeable to his lovely Wards, and grateful to the good old Man.

After this morning Exerciſe, I ſuppoſe that *Hermippus*, and his Female Pupils, retire in order to bathe, to dreſs, and to adorn themſelves, all which I look upon as no leſs neceſſary for the old Man, than fit and convenient for the young Women. Every-Body knows, that the Antients were remarkably fond of Baths, and of Unctions, eſpecially for old Men; and the *Arabian* Phyſicians preſcribe then once in a Week or ten Days, and order ſome hot and well ſpiced Meat to be eaten after uſing them; but to be ſure waſhing, cleanſing, and keeping the Body neat, as they tend to make old Men pleaſant and agreeable to ſuch as converſe with them, ſo they contribute not a little to their own Eaſe, and to the preſerving that Suppleneſs in the Limbs, which is frequently attacked by old Age. On the other Hand, Elegancy in Dreſs, and great Niceneſs about their Bodies, is of very great Conſequence to the Preſervation of ſuch a Temper in theſe young Maids as is fit to make them uſeful in that Way of which we are ſpeaking. About Noon, after all this Exerciſe is quite over, I ſuppoſe *Hermippus* meets his Maidens with as much Chearfulneſs, as his Conſtitution will admit, while they receive him with that Sprightlineſs that is natural to theirs. A ſhort Converſation ſhould precede a light, well-choſen and wholeſome Entertainment, of which all feeding freely, but not to Fulneſs, ſeaſon the neceſſary Buſineſs of recruiting the Body with ſuch ingenious and diverting Stories, as may amuſe and recreat the Mind. After the

Repaſt,

Repast, Music, vocal and instrumental, and then a Walk, or, if the Weather will not permit it, some breathing Exercise within Doors, to such a Degree as may excite Colour, but without forcing a Sweat.

The Evening should among such Company be chiefly dedicated to Diversion, the Ladies, and especially the youngest, should be indulged in all the little innocent Pastimes that contribute either to the Exercise of their Limbs, or the Improvements of their Wits, and these ought to take their Turns, according to the Rule prescribed by their Director. For Instance, after Blindman's Buff, Hoop and Hide, or hunting the Hare, there should succeed Questions and Commands, Pictures and Motto's, Riddles, or something of the like Sort; and last of all, two or three of the Eldest might gently lead them by a few grave Stories into a fit Disposition for their Evening Devotions; after which, they might retire to their Dormitory, each having her proper Cell, but all open at the Top, as also the Director's Apartment, at the upper End. In a College like this, with such Company, and under such Regulations, where all the Pupils are chaste as *Diana*'s Nymphs, fresh as the Spring, sweet as the Summer, and harmless as the Winter, ever full of Life and Spirits, free from Diseases, Cares or Distractions of Mind, easy in their Tempers, affable in their Manners, fond of obliging, grateful when obliged; I can scarce imagine that any Man could spend his Time more agreeably than *Hermippus*, live freer from a Sense of Sorrow, or more remote from the Shadow of Death. By this Regimen he might be provided with an almost continual Refreshment of their odoriferous Breaths, and never lose their Company, but at Seasons proper for them and for him. His Blood would not only receive constant Supplies of Spirits from the artificial Atmosphere, constituted by this Contrivance, but

Genius alſo would be kept briſk and lively, by a perpetual Intercourſe with Perſons in the moſt active Period of Life. Secluded in ſuch a Retreat, from all the Hurry, all the Diſorder, all the Accidents that attend a Life of Buſineſs, he would eaſily eſcape Diſquiet and Fatigue, removed from all the Views of Profit, Pomp and Pleaſure; he would never feel the cruel Diſturbance of any reſtleſs Paſſion, the Deſire of getting would never torment him, he would never be perplexed with the Fears of loſing, if his Heart was at any Time touched with Pain, it muſt be at the parting with a Scholar, and even this would admit of ſome Relief, from the Pleaſure afforded him by receiving a new Diſciple. At leaſt, theſe are the Comforts I have figured to myſelf, and ſuch of my Readers, as are bleſſed with more vigorous Fancies, may conceive him in Poſſeſſion of ſtill higher and more exquiſite Bleſſings.

I am ſenſible it may be objected, that the whole of this Suppoſition is abſolutely arbitrary, that amongſt the *Romans*, there never was any ſuch College (*a*) as this, under the Direction of any Man, nor, for ought appears, in any other Nation. But then it is to be conſidered, that I have ſo ſtated it: If *Hermippus* was really nouriſhed by the Breath of Women, as I have already ſhewn it is very reaſonable to believe he might, then we muſt conceive to ourſelves ſome Occupation, ſome Way of Life in which he might eaſily, and conſtantly receive this comfortable Medecine; and if the Account I have given be ſo far probable in itſelf, and free from Abſurdity, as to convey clearly to the Reader's Mind ſuch an Idea as I would willingly have it, it is not at all material, whether there ever was ſuch a College, for that

(*a*) Except it may be the Puellæ Fauſtinianæ, of whom we find ſome Mention made in the antient Inſcriptions.

that comes not at all within my Aſſertion, it is ſufficient for my Purpoſe, if ſuch a College there might have been. Another Reader may, perhaps, deviſe ſome eaſier, clearer, and more probable Method of interpreting this Inſcription, if he does, I ſhall not diſpute with, or envy him the Fertility of his Invention. My Account of the Matter ſerves to help the Notion I have formed of the Poſſibility of the Thing, and therefore as a Marthematician draws his Figures in order to explain the Propoſitions he lays down, ſo I have exhibited this Example, to illuſtrate the Doctrine that I would recommend.

One may likewiſe ſuggeſt, that moſt of the Examples hitherto alleged of the long Life of ſuch as have taught young People, do not reach the Point I have advanced, in as much as they all confeſſedly belong to young Men. Yet, if this Objection affects what I have delivered, the Credit of the Inſcription remains ſtill untouch'd, ſince ſome underſtand it of Boys, though I incline to interpret it of Girls, for Reaſons that will hereafter occur. But whoever makes this Objection, muſt admit, at the Time of making it, that there is an extraordinary Efficacy in the Breath of young Men, which duly conſidered, will be found a very great Conceſſion in my Favour; ſince, if there be any ſuch Efficacy in the Breath of young Men, no Reaſon can be aſſigned why my Suppoſition ſhould be held leſs reaſonable. All Things, therefore, that make in general in Favour of human Breath, or in Favour of the Breath of young People, tend to ſtrengthen and ſupport what I have laid down. As to thoſe particular Circumſtances which render female Breath preferable, it lies upon me to aſſign them, and this I ſhall do in its proper Place; in the mean time give me leave to remark one Thing more in Favour of my fictitious Hiſtory of the College of Vigins, *viz.* That the greateſt Men have thought it allowable to introduce ſuch De-

ſcriptions wherever they have judged them requiſite, or agreeable to the Subject of which they were treating. The learned Sir *Thomas More* laid down a Syſtem of Politics in his *Utopia* (*b*). *Barclay* has written an ingenious Hiſtory in his *Argenis*, and the great Chancellor *Bacon* has exhibited the moſt beautifull of all Fictions in his Hiſtory of the *New Atlantis* (*c*), which Hiſtory, if I miſtake not, gave Birth to the Royal Society in *England*.

But I muſt not conceal two other Objections of far greater Weight, that have been made to this Doctrine of mine, by the ingenious Mr. *Nunning* (*d*). If, ſays that learned Perſon, your Syſtem be founded in Truth, if there be really any ſuch Vigour and Efficacy in the Breath of Women, or even of young Women, how comes it to paſs, that thoſe Men have not attained to any extraordinary Age, who are known to have had the greateſt Ad-

(*b*) There are ſome Diſputes about the firſt Edition of this Book; The famous Mr. Maittaire fancies, there was one in the Year 1516; but he is miſtaken, the firſt Edition of it bore the following Tittle. De optimo Reipublicæ ſtatu; deque nova inſula Utopia Thomae More libro duo, quibus præfiguntur Epiſtolae Deſiderii Eraſmi, Gul. Budaei, Petri Egidii, ac in fine adjuncta Hieron. Buſlidii Epiſtola. Baſileae. Joan. Froben. 1518 in 4°. and has been printed very often ſince. It was tranſlated into Engliſh by Ralph Robinſon, in 1557, which Tranſlation Biſhop Burnet miſtook for the Author's own; however, he ventured to make another Tranſlation in 1683, and a very good one it is. It was tranſlated into Italian in 1548, but the Author of that Verſion is not known. There have been three Tranſlations in French, of which that by Sorbire is eſteemed the beſt. (*c*) The Author is right enough in his Obſervation, Abraham Cowley borrowed his Notion of a Philoſophic College from Lord Bacon's Atlantis, and from Mr. Cowley's Notion of ſuch a College the Royal Society had its Beginning. (*d*) This Gentleman is Cannon of Verden, and is now publiſhing, in Germany, in Quarto, a Work, entituled Monumenta Monaſterienſia, which is to contain, the Elogies of all the great Men who have been Natives of the Biſhoprick of Munſter.

vantages

vantages possible in this Way? Upon this he puts two, Questions, Why, says he, did not *Solomon*, whose Wives and Coucubines were so numerous, and who undoubtedly were young, beautiful, and kept entirely from other Men; Why did not this *Solomon*, continues he, live beyond the ordinary Age of Man; whereas, the Scripture tells us, that he did not reach that which is common in our Times? This is the first Objection, and it must be owned, that Mr. *Nunning* has put it very modestly; for *Solomon* had, beside this, many other Advantages. He was undoubtedly a great Philosopher, an excellent Naturalist, and understood perfectly the Art of conducting Life, to which we may add, that some have believed him an exquisite Anatomist, Physician and Chymist; so that if he died before Seventy, who was possessed of such extensive Power, such immense Riches, and such Wisdom as never centred in another Man, What Reason is there to suppose, that such, as are infinitely below him in all Respects, should acquire the Knowledge of that which was indubitably hid from him? This is the Case stated fairly, freely, and fully; for we mean not to cheat or deceive our Readers, but to inform and satisfy them; our Endeavour is not to give an Air of Veracity to our own Opnion, but to rectify our own Notions by the Standard of Truth.

Mr. *Nunning*'s second Objection is fetched from the Seraglio's of the *Turkish* Monarchs. Why, says he, do not the great Lords of the *Ottoman* Empire, who have such Numbers of young and fine Women, always in their Power, live to a great Age? Or rather, Why, since they have this Balsam of Life continually in their Possession, are they shorter-lived than other Men? and that too, in a Country where there are more long-lived People than in many others? This excellent Person might have fortified also this Objection, by extending it to the *Shahs* of *Persia*, the *Hans* of *Tartary*, the great *Moguls*, and

all the other *Eastern* Princes, who, in this Respect, enjoy to the full the same Advantages with the *Turkish* Sultans. I am not afraid of giving the utmost Weight to these Suggestions, because, if I can fairly and clearly refute them, my Doctrine must appear, if not absolutely certain, much more probable at least, and much more agreeable to Truth, than if these Objections had never been mentioned. I do indeed admit, that both are very plausible, both seem directly distructive of my System; but if, notwithstanding all this, I am, as I think I am, in a Capacity of shewing that they do not at all affect what I have advanced, but that on the contrary when duly considered, they fortify it extreamly, then, I hope, the Reader will attend with the greater Satisfaction, to some additional Arguments that I shall offer in support of this Notion. It is the great Beauty of Truth, that the more we examine it, the more different Lights in which we place it, the more Pains we take in turning and twisting it, the more we perceive its Excellency, and the better the Mind is satisfied about it; whereas Falshood, however fair it may appear, when dress'd out to Advantage, or set in a false Light, yet it never can stand the Test of a strict and unbiased Enquiry.

The History of *Solomon* is very largely recorded in the sacred Writings; and the Circumstances therein laid down, enable us to give such an Account of the Manner of that Prince's Life, that we need be under no Sort of Surprize at the Earliness of his Death. He was, it is true, the wisest Man that ever lived, of which he has left us very noble Testimonies in his Writings. He was a great Politician, excellently skilled in the Arts, and a perfect Master of the polite Literature of those Times; but with all this, we see that he was a very voluptuous Man. Science and Pleasure engrossed him by turns; he would have pushed his Researches beyond the Bounds of human Nature; and when he found

found himself checked, then he began to complain of the Burthen of Knowledge, and the Tiresomeness of such Enquiries. To deliver himself from these Anxieties, to calm his Cares, to drown his Doubts, and bury his Apprehensions in Oblivion, he had recourse to sensual Delights, having constantly in his Seraglio a Multitude of fine Women, amounting, as the Author of the Book of *Kings* tells us, to Seven hundred Wives, who were Princesses, and Three hundred Concubines (*e*). With these, he led an effeminate, lascivious, and profligate Life. These Women were of all Nations, *Egyptians*, *Moabites*, *Ammonites*, *Edomites*, *Zidonians*, and *Hittites*, and each endeavoured to recommend herself to his Favour, by all the studied Arts of Luxury (*f*). Amongst such a *heterogeneous* Mass of Females, all corrupt in their Morals, all different in their Customs, all filled with Jealousy and Emulation of each other, what Reason was there to hope either for Quiet, or for Health?

In the Description we have given of the Life of *Hermippus*, we have used our utmost Endeavour, to shew the Means by which this sovereign Medicine, we are discoursing of, operates, and how it is to be employed. We suppose our old Man to be of a gentle, uniform, and pleasant Disposition, always easie, always content, and surrounded by Numbers of blooming Virgins, too young to have either their Bodies, or their Thoughts tainted; and we suppose these Persons spending their Time together, in chaste and innocent Amusements. But the Life of *Solomon* was the very reverse of this, his Thoughts were in a perpetual Hurry, his Mind in constant Agitation; one Day deeply plunged in Philosophical and Metaphysical Contemplations; the next sunk in sceptical Doubts, and gloomy Reflections; the third giving a loose to his Pleasures, and abandoning himself

(*e*) 1 Kings, xi. 3. (*f*) Ibid. v. 1.

without

without Reſtraint, not only to the Lewdneſs of his own Deſires, but to the wilder Extravagancies of a Multitude of vicious Women. All this we learn, not only from Hiſtories of indubitable Authority, but from his own Writings; there we ſee the Struggles of his Heart; there we ſee his reſtleſs Love of Pleaſure; his intemperate Thriſt after Knowledge, and in Conſequence thereof his Agonies and Diſquiet. Is there any Likeneſs between theſe two Characters? Can one imagine, that the Converſation of Women in ſuch a Diverſity of Circumſtances, ſhould have the ſame Effect on *Solomon* and *Hermippus*? Or can it enter into the Head of any Man, bleſſed with a ſound Underſtanding, that this, or any other Medicine, could defend *Solomon* from old Age, conſidering the Courſe he held? Was there ever a Man that ſtudied the Prolongation of Life with more Aſſiduity than *Solomon* laboured to ſhorten it? Did he not harraſs his Spirits with intricate and perplexed Enquiries? Did he not vex himſelf With perpetual Queſtions about preſent and future Felicity, which rendered it impoſſible for him to enjoy it? Did he not, by indulging his Paſſions, ſcatter the Seeds of Deſtruction? And did he not, by his Luxury and Intemperance, cheriſh and cultivate them, till they at laſt, as they always do, diſturbed the Frame of his Mind, as well as ruined his Conſtitution? What wonder then that *Solomon* was no *Long-liver*?

What I have ſaid, will, I dare ſay, ſatisfy the worthy Gentleman who propoſed this Doubt, and every Reader who ſeriouſly conſiders it. The Objection takes *Solomon* for a Perſon in that very Situation wherein I would place *Hermippus*; but I have ſhewn this to be altogether groundleſs. The Objection takes it for granted, that I look upon the Breath of young Women to be an univerſal Medicine; whereas, I aſſert only, that the Breath of young Virgins, in a particular Way, may de-

fend a Perſon againſt old Age, who, by Temperance and Moderation, defends himſelf againſt Diſeaſes. But, beſides what I have mentioned, I have yet ſomething more to ſay as to *Solomon*, which I might have offered before, and which would have excuſed me from examining his Caſe at all, if I had inclined to have ſheltered myſelf under any ſ ch Subterfuge.

All the Accounts we have of *Solomon*, ſuppoſe him to be under a particular Diſpenſation, and that he had Recourſe immediately to God himſelf, at leaſt twice in his Life, ſo that this Man was not in the ſame Situation with others, and therefore not fit to be conſidered as an Example. I might puſh this further ſtill, by obſerving, that God was pleaſed to promiſe him Length of Days, if he imitated the Righteouſneſs of his Father *David* ; ſo that he had a much better Medicine in his Power, than human Wiſdom could ſupply him with, and yet he knew not how to uſe it. The Scriptures ſay, That *when* Solomon *was old, his Wives turned away his Heart after other Gods* (*g*). Oldneſs is here uſed in the Senſe in which I underſtand it, that is, with reſpect to the Condition, and not to the Years of Life ; for in that Senſe, *Solomon* was not old when he died, ſince he exceeded not Sixty-ſeven. The plain Meaning therefore of this Text muſt be, that when his Vices had broken his Conſtitution, and weakened his Faculties, then theſe Women, to whom he gave himſelf up, drew him to Idolatry, and theſe Nurſes of his ſecond Childhood induſtriouſly taught him to fall. Drawn by their Deluſions, he ſacrificed both Titles to long Life, *viz.* that which Temperance gave him by the Law of Nature, and that which by an extraordinary Revelation he received from God himſelf. For this no doubt included that, ſince we cannot ſuppoſe that God promiſed

(*g*) Ibid. v. 4.

long

long Life to *Solomon* without an implied Condition, that he attended to the natural Means for attaining it, the Laws and Promises of God must be always rational, because they are made and propounded to reasonable Creatures.

After examining this Objection so fully, it will cause me much less Trouble to clear up the other. For what can there be more contrary to, or irreconcilable with the Doctrine I have laid down, than the Lives led by *Eastern* Monarchs; all Writers agree, that to give Strength and Firmness to the Body, there is nothing so necessary as Chastity in green Years. The *Germans*, as *Tacitus* tells us, were won't to preserve themselves from Women, till they were thirty at least, and this he assigns as the principal Cause of their Robustness, Courage and long Life (*h*). Long before his Time, the *Spartans* had formed the same Notions, led thereto by Reason and Experience (*i*), but with regard to the *Asiatic* Princes, they never know what Purity of Manners and Chastity of Mind mean, they are corrupted in their Mother's Nurseries, and the dissolute Temper of the Father prevents the virtuous Education of the Son. While they are yet Striplings, they are permitted the Use of Women, in order to enervate their Minds, and when they grow up, an effeminate Luxury becomes the prime Business of their Lives. Amongst such Men as these, shall we look for Health or long Life? Is this agreeable to the Rules of Wisdom or Science, I mean, to the natural Dictates of good Sense, or to the Maxims of Physic? If not, where lyes the Strength of the Objection?

But besides all this, what if there be still a shorter, plainer, or more decisive Answer, which is, that we can never properly judge in this Case, because Experi-

(*h*) De Morib. German. (*i*) Plutarch. in Lacon.

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ence teaches us, that these Princes seldom or never die a natural Death. In the Field they are exposed to the common Chances of War; and if we look into the *Turkish*, *Persian*, or *Indian* Stories, we shall find at least a third Part of their Monarchs have fallen in Battle. Again, consider them in their civil Capacity, and from the very Nature of an arbitrary despotic Government, you must be sensible that they are continually liable to popular Insurrections, in which many of their Princes have likewise fallen. But if you pursue them further, and follow them into the Recesses of their private Life, as you will perceive them to be no way happier, so you will find them much less safe than any of their Subjects. The Intrigues and Jealousies of their many Wives must always expose such Princes to a Multitude of Dangers, especially in Countries where Poisons are very common, and where the most dexterous Use of them is common too.

But what if the sacred History, which furnished the first and strongest Objection, contains another History, which is the fullest, clearest and most satisfactory Proof that can be offered in Favour of the Opinion I espouse? The Case I mean is that of King *David* in his old Age, which I shall state fully and fairly. It is said, that King *David* grew old and stricken in Years, his natural Heat decaying to such a degree, that no Addition of Cloaths could give him Heat; in this Distress, the Physicians advised him to the very Remedy which I recommend. Let there be sought, said they, for my Lord the King, a young Virgin, and let her stand before the King, and let her cherish him, and let her lie in his Bosom, that my Lord the King may get Heat. Accordingly *Abishag* the *Shunamite*, was brought to the King, and of her we read, that she was a Damsel very fair, that she cherished the King, and ministred to him; but the King *knew her*

 not

nor (*k*). This is the Story, as it lies in the Book, and from hence I think it plainly appears, that the Physicians of those Times were well acquainted with the Efficacy of this Remedy, and understood how Age might be benefited by Youth.

The famous Monk *Roger Bacon*, whom I have cited before, in his Treatise of the Cure of old Age, has a large Chapter upon this Subject; though, as he wrote to a Pope, and in an Age noways favourable to him or his Discoveries, he thought proper to conceal what he admits to be the most efficacious Medicine it was in his Power to prescribe, under such dark and obscure Terms, that few. I believe have reached his true Meaning. It may perhaps be suspected that I have deceived myself, and that having this Notion in my Head, I have found in *Bacon*'s (*l*) Works Things that never were there; for which Reason, as well as because I can offer nothing more curious, or more pertinent of my own, I will cite as much of his Book, as relates to this Subject, and leave it to my Reader to decide how far I do, or do not do him Justice by my Comment.

" I have read many Volumes of the Wise, I find few " Things in Physic which restore the natural Heat, " weakened by Dissolution of the innate Moisture, or In- " crease of a foreign one. But certain wise Men have " tacitely made mention of some Medicines, which is like- " ned to that which goes out of the Mine of the noble " Animal, they affirm, that in it there is a Force and " Virtue, which restores and encreases the natural Heat. " As to its Disposition, they say, 'tis like Youth itself, " and contains an equal and temperate Complexion; and " the Signs of a temperate Complexion in Men are,

(*k*) I Kings, i. 1. See also the Commentaries of Munster, Grotius, &c among the larger Critics, who all interpret these Passages of Scripture in this way. (*l*) R. Bacon. de Prolongatione Vitæ, c. xii.

when

" when their Colour is made up of White and Red, when " the Hair is yellow, inclining to Redness and Curling; according to *Pliny*, when the Flesh is moderate, both in Quality and Quantity; when a Man's " Dreams are delightful; his Countenance chearful and " pleasant, and when in his Appetite of Eating and " Drinking he is moderate. This Medicine indeed is like " to such a Complexion; for 'tis of a moderate heat, its " Fume is temperate and sweet, and grateful to the Smell; " when it departs from this Temperature, it departs so " far from its Virtue and Goodness. This Medicine doth " therefore temperately heat because it is temperately hot, " it therefore heals because it is whole. When it is sick, " it makes a Man sick; when it is distempered, it breeds " Distempers, and changeth the Body to its own Disposition, because of the Similitude it hath with the Body.

" For the Infirmity of a brute Animal, rarely passeth into Man, but into another Animal of the same " Kind. But the Infirmity of a Man passeth into " Man, and so doth Health because of Likeness. Know " most Gracious Prince, That in this, there is a great " Secret. For *Galen* saith, that whatever is dissolved " from any Thing, it must of necessity be assimilated " to that Thing, as is manifest in Diseases passing from " one to another; such as Weakness of the Eyes, and " Pestilential Diseases. This Thing hath an admirable " Property, for it doth not only render human Bodies " safe from Corruption, but it defends also the Bodies " of Plants from Putrefaction. This Thing is seldom " found, and although sometimes it be found, yet it " cannot commodiously be had of all Men: And instead of it, the Wise do use that Medicine which is " in the Bowels of the Earth, complete and prepared, " and that which swims in the Sea, and that which is the " square Stone of the noble Animal; so that every Part

may

"may be free from the Infection of another. But if "that Stone cannot be acquired, let other Elements "separated, divided, and purified be made use of.

"Now when this Thing is like to Youth, that is of "temperate Complexion, it hath good Operations; if "its Temperature be better, it produceth better Effects; "sometimes it is even in the highest Degree of its Per-"fection, and then it operates best, and then there is "that Property whereof we have spoken before. This "differs from other Medicines and Nutriments, which "heat and moisten after a certain temperate Manner, "and are good for old Men. For other Medicines prin-"cipally heat and moisten the Body; and secondarily, "they strengthen the native Heat; but this doth prin-"cipally strengthen the native Heat, and after that, re-"freshes the Body by moistening and heating it. For it "reduces this Heat in old Men, who have it but weakly "and deficient, to a certain stronger and more vehement "Power. If a Plaister be made hereof, and applied "to the Stomach, it will help very much, for it will "refresh the Stomach itself, and excite an Appetite; it "will very highly recreate an old Man, and change him "to a Kind of Youth, and will make Complexions, by "what means soever depraved or corrupted, better.

"Many wise Men have spoken but little of this "Thing, they have indeed laid down another Thing "like it, as *Galen* in his fifth Book of simple Medicines, "and *Johannes Damascenus*, in his Aphorisms. But "it is to be observed that *Venus* doth weaken and de-"molish the Power and Virtue of this Thing; and it "is very likely that the Son of the Prince, in his second "Canon of simple Medicines, spoke of the Thing, "where he saith, that there is a certain Medicine con-"cealed by wise Men, lest the incontinent should of-"fend their Creator. There is such a Heat in this

Thing

" Thing, as in young Men of a ſound Complexion, and " and if I durſt declare the Properties of this Heat, this " moſt hidden Secret ſhould preſently be revealed. For " this Heat doth help the Palſical, it reſtores and pre- " ſerves the waſted Strength of the native Heat, cauſ- " eth it to flouriſh in all the Members, and gently re- " vives the Aged." Theſe are preciſely the Words of Fryar *Bacon*; the Thing now to be conſidered is, whether we have rightly interpreted them, or whether they are capable of any juſter, and more natural Senſe, which, after a few Reflections on the Motives which have determined us, ſhall be left to the Reader's Judgment.

Some have entertained an Opinion, that this myſterious Preparation was no other than the Quinteſſence of human Blood; but whoever conſiders the Deſcription of it in all its Parts, will eaſily diſcern, that it can be no ſuch Thing, ſince the Odour or Scent of it is recommended on Account of its grateful Sweetneſs; beſides, Quinteſſences are taken inwardly; whereas, he directs the Medicine to be applied as a Plaiſter to the Stomach; and indeed the other Marks agree with ſuch a Quinteſſence as ill as this. Others have believed, that our Author intended here to deſcribe a Kind of precious Stone, but ſuch muſt be abſolutely unacquainted with his Manner of Writing; for he is no affecter of Myſteries, in order to ſtrike his Reader with Amazement, or to raiſe his own Reputation; both of theſe Things he juſtly contemned. His Obſcurity proceeds from this, that, at the Time he wrote, he was in Priſon for writing againſt the Philoſophy that was then current, and he addreſs'd this Book to Pope *Nicholas* IV. his Proſecutor, in order to obtain his Pardon; but being doubtful how far it would operate, he was very cautious in writing, that he might not afford Room for a ſecond Accuſation, of laying Things ſecret in their Nature open to vulgar

Capacities. Now, if he was here describing a precious Stone, why should he talk so darkly? This certainly did not require so much Pains to be taken to hide it; and so far would such a dark Account have been from serving his Purpose, that it would have been visibly contrary to his Design, by leaving Room for extraordinary Conjectures, where, without the least Danger, he might have spoken out. Whereas, if our Interpretation be admitted, there was the utmost Reason for all this Caution; his Apology is perfectly reasonable, and all the Doubtings and Hesitations that are thrown in, appear so many modest Excuses, very artfully and very properly placed.

Let us consider this Description of *Bacon's*, and compare it with the Picture drawn by the Hand of a greater, and still more knowing Man, and we shall be apt to think that we hear *Solomon* describing the lovely *Shunamite*. Look upon *Bacon's* Words again, and imagine the thin Veil to be removed; you will then see the perfect Figure of this Damsel that was very fair; you will discern the Rose of *Sharon*, and the Lilly of *Damascus*; her Hair like Purple, in curling Locks; her two young Roes that are Twins, feeding among Lillies; her Head filled with the Dew, and her Locks with the Drops of the Night; her Countenance fair as the Moon, clear as the Sun; her Fruit sweet to the Taste, as she sits under the Shadow with great Delight; her Spikenard and chief Spices, while the South-wind blows upon her Garden, that the Spices thereof may blow; her Well of living Waters, and Streams of *Lebanon*; and here the fairest among Women is wounded by the Watchmen, and then her beloved departs.

This Commentary sufficiently explains the Text, but to put it beyond Doubt, and to apply all this effectually to my Subject, I shall touch gently on two or three remarkable

markable Passages. In the first Place, our Author says, that this Medicine is liken'd to that which goes out of the Mine of the noble Animal; and what can this Mine be but Woman, in whom, as in a Mine, the noble Animal is formed. Then again, our Author says, the Infirmity of a brute Animal rarely passes into Man, but into another Animal of the same Kind; but the Infirmity of a Man passes into Man, and so does Health, because of Likeness. Here he lays open a great Secret in Philosophy, *viz.* That there is a Sympathy in Health, as well as Contagion in Disease, and that as a morbid Breath infects, so a wholsome one may exhilerate. Taken in this Sense, nothing can be easier, plainer, or more rational, nor is there any other Sense the Words, literally taken, can bear. The last Passage I shall remark is, when he observes, that *Venus* weakens and diminishes the Power and Virtue of this Remedy. How exactly does this agree with the pertinent Reflection of the Author of the Book of *Kings*, when repeating the Uses *David* made of *Abishag*; he says, with a particular Emphasis, *but the King knew her not*! A young Virgin taken in this Manner, recals Heat and Life into an old Man; but if forgetting that this is a temporary and artificial Vigour, he uses it as if it were a natural one; he may indeed give Life to another, but it will be at the Expence of his own. When these Exploits are related to us as Marks of old Mens Vigour, we should set them down as Marks of their Folly too; for as *Solomon* says, that *there is a Time to be born, and a Time to die*; so Nature and true Philosophy teaches, that there is a Time to beget, and a Time to abstain from begetting.

I will take the Liberty also of drawing some Advantage even from the second Objection, since, with respect to *Eastern* Princes, though it be true that most of them die early, yet it is no less true, that where they

do not die violent Deaths, they frequently live to a great Age; as for Inſtance, *Shah Abbas*, and *Aurengzebe.* Now if we conſider the immenſe Fatigues of theſe Monarchs, the many Battles they fought, the tedious Marches they made, the Variety of Dangers they run through, and the vaſt Expence of Spirits that a Life of ſuch continued Action, ſuch intenſe Thought muſt occaſion; it will not be eaſy to find in a Country, where the Art of Phyſic is far from being ſo perfect as it is even in *Europe*; I ſay it would be hard to find in ſuch Places, any Medicine capable of producing ſo extraordinary Effect, if we exclude this of which I am ſpeaking. For though I am very doubtful, and therefore lay no Streſs on the Wholeſomeneſs of the Breath of Women; yet, in the Seraglios of ſuch Princes, there are always ſo many Virgins, and theſe of ſuch near Acceſs to the Perſon of the Prince, that I cannot but apprehend his Vigour and Health, to be greatly ſupported by theſe odoriferous Streams of ſalutary Air. I cannot help adding what ſeems to be ſtill a ſtronger Argument in Favour of my Suppoſition, and that is, that the *Arab* Princes, ſcattered through the Dominions of the Grand Signior, who are leſs expoſed to foreign Wars, or domeſtic Intrigues, than other oriental Princes, actually live beyond the ordinary Age of Man, and die at laſt as every Man ought to die, becauſe their Blood can run no longer. At leaſt, I have a right to make uſe of a Circumſtance ſo probable as this is, in ſupport of my Opinion, when it is thought reaſonable to take a Fact, which has only a ſuperficial Reſemblance to the Caſe I have ſtated, as a ſufficient ground for an Objection againſt the Poſition I am endeavouring to make good; Probability is certainly nearer a-kin to Evidence, than a bare Similitude of Circumſtances, which vaniſhes upon a ſtrict Examination.

After theſe Excurſions, let us return to a more ſtrict

Examination of our Subject: I have already shown how the Breath of Virgins may operate upon old Men, when mix'd with the common Air, and so respired by them. But let us consider a little, whether these numerous and subtile Effluvia may not operate some other Way than this. All Physicians agree, since the Doctrine of the Circulation of the Blood has been established, as well as made known to the World, by the Skill and Learning of that incomparable *Englishman* Doctor *Harvey* (*m*); that a great Part of our Aliments, after entering the Blood, are thrown out from thence in so imperceptible a Manner, that this kind of Evacuation is very properly stiled insensible Perspiration. This was first carefully examined by *Sanctorius*, who found that it was far more considerable alone, than all the other animal Secretions taken together(*n*). If this be so, and that it is so, no Man in his Senses now doubts, then it follows, that there must be prodigious Quantities of the Matter of this insensible Perspiration mixed in the Air, surrounding the perspiring Bodies, and consequently this Air must be impregnated strongly with the Qualities inherent to that Matter.

If we push this Enquiry still further, and labour to make ourselves acquainted with the Nature of the Particles that are thus thrown off, a little Attention will make that Matter plain. For since insensible Perspiration

(*m*) Our Auther alludes here to the remarkable Felicity of Doctor Harvey, who first found out, and then fully demonstrated the Doctrine of the Circulation of the Blood, which was at first, as most new Inventions are, opposed with great Heat and Spleen; but came at last to be as generally received and admired, as it deserves. Doctor Harvey died in 1657, thirty Years after he first published his Discovery, in his Exercitatio Anatomica de motu cordis; printed at Francfort, in 1627. (*n*) See his famous Treatise de Medicina Statica, which the English Reader may consult in his own Language, translated by the judicious and indefatigable Dr. Quincy.

is owing to the Circulation of the Blood, it neceſſarily follows, that the Particles thrown off by the Blood, muſt participate of the Nature of that Fluid from which they are thrown off. Now we know the Blood of young People to be ſoft, oily, and balſamic, as well as we can know any Thing, becauſe this appears to us from its Effects, which are a brisk and lively Diſpoſition, perfect Health, and quick Growth; to all which, a Blood thus conſtituted, is abſolutely neceſſary. Upon theſe Principles, it is plain, that the Matter perſpired by young People in ſuch Circumſtances, as I have ſuppoſed the Pupils of *Hermippus* to be, muſt have all the Qualities of their Blood, and be a ſoft, ſmooth, ſlippery, balſamic Steam, continually flowing from their Bodies, and as they are conſtantly drawing in the circumambient Air, and continually throwing off this Matter, they muſt in the compaſs of a few Hours, abſolutely change the whole Maſs of Air, in a Room where they are taught by their Preceptor, who, in that Caſe, will receive into himſelf a large Proportion of this perſpirable Matter, in the ſame Manner that it is thrown off by them.

There are many People, I know, who will be apt to treat this Part of my Diſcourſe as whimſical and chimerical, and for this very Reaſon, I have not inſiſted upon it ſo largely as I might have done, or in ſuch ſtrong and direct Terms. I might have entered nicely into the Computations that have been made of the Quantity of Matter thrown off in this Way, and from thence I might have deduced many curious, and to competent Judges, convincing Proofs; but I affect not this critical Kind of Writing, which might poſſibly deprive me of a great Number of Readers, and ſecure the Aſſent only of thoſe who are leaſt likely to carry this Doctrine into Practice. But let me have leave to obſerve, that what I have laid down is an indiſputable Fact, and not among the Num-

ber

ber of those about which much has been written, ar nothing settled. *Sanctorius*, who first treated this Ma ter judiciously and practically, had the Honour to pe fect his Discovery, and to carry the Matter as far as could go, and this in the best Method, I mean that Experiments; for he had a Chair fixed on a Ballanc and in such a Manner accommodated with Springs, to discover the slightest Alteration in his Weight. I the Use of this Chair, and by constant Observation what he eat, drank, perspired, and evacuated eve other Way, he came at the certain Knowledge of wh he has delivered, and therefore we may, with the utmo Confidence, believe, that at least, one half of wh we eat or drink, after passing through the Blood, thrown off in the Way I have discribed(*o*).

A very ingenious *Frenchman*, to whom the Wor is indebted for as profitable, and, at the same time, pleasant a Work, as any published of late Years, h endeavoured to illustrate this Doctrine by a very w contrived Fiction, which I will repeat to the Read because nothing can serve my purpose better, as I a persuaded nothing can entertain him more(*p*). "T " Day after our Arrival at *London* several Tradesm " came to our Lodgings, in order to sell us the Co " modities and Curiosities of their Country. Eve " one of the Company fixed readily his Attention " what pleased him most. Some bought Gloves, " thers Ribbons, and others Silk Stockings; the M

(*o*) We must consider, in reasoning upon this Subject that Sa torius wrote in Italy, where the Perspiration may be reasona supposed much greater than in Northern Countries, which Author was aware of, and has made a proper Deduction. (*p*) M langes d'Histoire et de Literature par M. de Vigneul-Marvi Tom. ii. p. 461. It may not be amiss to observe, that thi not the true Name of the Author of that curious Book, but under which he chose to hide it, on Account of some free C sures contained in that diverting Miscellany.

chand

" chandize, which fell to my Share, was several Per-
" spective Glasses and Microscopes. He who sold them
" was an excellent Mathematician, a Man of great
" Capacity, and could speak *French* tollerably well. I
" kept him to Dinner, and as he was mighty well pleas-
" ed with the Entertainment, he told me after he rose
" from Table, that he had a great Curiosity to shew
" me. He then took out of a Shagreen Box an In-
" strument in a Tortoishell Case, which proved to be
" a most excellent Microscope. I may well bestow this
" Epithet upon it, since it was so excellent, as not only
" to discover an Infinity of Bodies imperceptible to
" the naked Eye, but even the Atoms of *Epicurus*, the
" subtile Matter of *Descartes*, the Vapours of the Earth,
" those which flow from our own Bodies, and such as
" derive to us here the Influence of the Stars.

" The first Experiment I made was looking on the
" Person from whom I receiv'd it, at the Distance of
" four or five Paces, which gave me an Opportunity of
" descerning an infinite Number of little Worms, that
" were feeding most voraciously upon his Cloaths, by
" which I perceived, that, contrary to the common
" Opinion, it is not we who wear out our Cloaths, but
" they are fairly eaten off our Backs by these invisible
" Insects; I changed my Situation, and considering
" my Mathematician in another light, he appeared to
" me inveloped in a dark Cloud. He told me, that
" this Appearance was owing to his perspiring strongly
" after Dinner, and that this ought to convince me of
" the Truth of what *Sanctorius* had delivered in respect
" to the Proportions between this and other Secre-
" tions.

" We next went into the Kitchen, where there was
" a large Piece of Beef roasting for the Servants, and I had
" the Pleasure of seeing with the same Microscope, how
" the fire seperates all the Parts of the Wood, upon
" which

" which it acts, and darts them by the Violence of its Mo-
" tion against the Beef that turns before it, wounding
" it as it were with an infinite Number of Shafts, and
" so tearing it to Pieces, some of which are converted
" into Juice, and others into a delicate Kind of Smoke
" or Vapour, which filled the Kitchen, and was very
" sensibly distinguished by our Nostrils.

" Going out of the House, we saw four young Men
" playing at Ball. I, at first Sight, felt a strong In-
" clination in Favour of one, and as strong an Aversi-
" on against another, whence I began earnestly to wish
" that this might win, and that might lose. I exa-
" mined both with the Microscope, and thereby easily
" distinguished the Source of these Passions. As the
" Men were extremely heated with their Exercise,
" they perspired strongly, so that Clouds of the Mat-
" ter flowing from them reached us. My Glass shew-
" ed me distinctly, that the Matter, perspired by him
" for whom I had an Inclination, was exactly similar
" to what was perspired by myself; whereas, the Mat-
" ter flowing from the other Person, was absolutely un-
" like to mine in all respects, and so jagged and beard-
" ed, that it seemed to wound and pierce me like so
" many Arrows. Hence I discerned, that the true Cause
" of our sudden Inclinations and Aversions consists in
" the Figures of the Matter perspiring from us, and from
" others, and in the Union or Contrariety of these in-
" sensible Vapours.

" We went out of the City, and, at some Miles Di-
" stance, we saw some Gentlemen diverting themselves
" in coursing a Hare; as the poor Creature passed al-
" most close by us, I had just Time to catch a Glance
" of her with my Glass. She appeared to me like a
" Ball of Fire, moving with prodigious Rapidity, and
" leaving a mighty Smoke behind her. This was the
" Matter perspired by the Animal, and I saw that the

" Dogs

" Dogs followed exactly the Tract of that Smoke, and
" were never at all at a Loss, except when the Wind dissi-
" pated the Cloud that issued from the flying Hare".

In this short Account, our Author very ingeniously rallies such as expect to have occular Demonstration of Things, that do not admit of any such Evidence. His Microscope is nothing more than an Invention to censure their Folly, and to expose the Madness of having that verified to the Senses, which can only be apprehended by Reason; yet this Kind of Weakness still prevails in the World, and, I dare say, there is many a Reader who would laugh at the Story of the Hare, as an absolute Fiction, and afterwards blush to see the same Thing gravely laid down by so judicious, so intelligent a Person, as the great *Boerhaave* (*q*). There seems to be nothing more unintelligible or absurd, than to assert that there are Things which are continually losing Part of there Weight, and yet never grow discernibly lighter; and yet this we see in the Case of the Antimonial Cup, which when five hundred Times made use of, and after bestowing an emetic Quality on five hundred Glasses of Wine, remains just as heavy as it was at first. We may say the same Thing of the odoriferous Effluvia of Ambergrease, and the less agreeable Steam of Assafœtida.

(*p*) See his Chymistry, Vol. i. p. 151. Wherein his Words are thus translated. The most subtile Part of the Juices of Animals is a fine Spirit, which is continually exhaling, wherein the proper Character of the Animal seems to reside, and whereby it is distinguished from all others. This we may infer from Hounds, which through a long Tract of Ground, and a Multitude of cross Treads, will distinguish a particular Animal out of a whole Flock, the Effluvia of whose Footsteps it had lately scented; or will find out their Master through an hundred cross Ways, in the Middle of a confused Concourse of People. By this we may infer, how thin and subtile, yet how different from all other Kinds of Bodies these Effluvia must be; they seem of an oily Origin, or to reside in a subtile Vehicle of an oily Kind, as may appear both from the Analogy of Things and other Properties.

None

None of these Things can be brought under the Cognizance of all our Senses; it is sufficient to convince our Reason if they fall under any one of them. For Instance, if I plainly discern the Smell of a Rose at a certain Distance, my Reason will tell me that I am within the Atmosphere of that Flower, because it is impossible that I should discern its Odour by the Smell, if its Effluvia did not strike the proper Organ of that Sense in me. Hence, with a little Reflection, I can easily form a Notion of this Flower, perspiring an infinite Number of odoriferous Particles, which, for a certain Distance, so much overcome all the other different Sorts of Matter floating in the Air, as to become so many Objects of my Sense of smelling (r).

But now, if we take this the other Way, and consider a Body continually perspiring such a Matter as is insensible to us, that is, Particles so subtile as to escape the Cognizance of all our Organs of Sensation, we must be extremely dull of Apprehension, if we do not conceive, that this perspiring Body must have its Atmosphere, as well as the Rose, or any other fragrant Flower. It is, therefore, I think, a Point set past all Dispute, that if a Number of Virgins are in the Company of an old Man, he must derive from them into himself a great Quantity of that subtile Matter, the Qualities of which have been before described, and especially if we consider, that as these Effluvia escape through the Pores, the Pores must consequently be continually open; and, if so, they must imbibe from without, as well as give Passage to what comes from within.

I doubt this will appear a new Paradox to many of my Readers, and methinks I see some of them ready to throw my Treatise out of their Hands, and crying with

(r) See a Multitude of these Instances collected, and properly applied in Mr. Boyle's curious Treatise upon Gems.

an Air of Self-sufficiency and Disdain; this poor Man is mad himself, and would fain make us so. But Patience a little, give me leave but to propose a few familiar Questions, and I will defy you to disbelieve what I have laid down. Is there any Thing more common, than to find a Stranguary ensue upon the Application of a Blister, and yet how can this happen, if the Particles of the Cantharides did not enter through the Pores, and thereby create a diversion of that salt watry Fluid, which is usually secreted by the Kidneys, and composes what we call Urine? On the other Hand, it is a thing certain, that Opium used in a Plaister will procure Sleep, which it could not possibly do, if in like Manner it did not find a Passage through the Pores into the Blood: I might likewise take Notice of an Effect that frequently, if not constantly, results from the Application of a Cataplasm of Camomile, to the Stomach, the bitter Taste of which Herb, in the Space of two Hours, is discerned on the Palate. I will mention one Instance more, which is at once so strong, and so common, as to put the Matter quite out of Dispute; I mean the ordinary Method of raising Salivations by Unction; for whoever considers this attentively must be sensible, that the Body may be very strongly affected by Things that enter only through the Pores (*s*).

I cannot help taking Notice of a very singular Passage in a *French* Historian, whose Character is perfectly well established, and which Passage, in my Apprehension, may contribute not a little to render all that I have asserted equally credible and clear. This Author tells us (*t*), that in the Year 1346, there broke out of the

(*s*) The Montpelier way of Salivating is still a stronger Proof of this, since it argues, that this Method of raising it is safer, more equal, and better adapted to the Ends it is to answer, than that of taking Things by the Mouth. (*t*) Abregé Chronologique de l'Histoire de France, par le Sieur de Mezeray, Tom. iii. p. 32.

Earth

Earth in *Cathay*, which is that Part of *Great Tartary* bordering upon *China*, a certain Vapour, so prodigiously stinking, as to destroy all living Creatures. This, like a subterraneous Fire, after it once escaped, rolled over two hundred Leagues of Country, devouring even the very Trees and Stones, and affected the Air in a wonderful Manner. From *Cathay*, it passed through *Asia* and *Greece*, from thence it crossed over into *Africa*, and after ravaging that Country, it entered *Europe*, in 1348, making such Havock in *France*, that not so much as a City, Village, or single House escaped, and from thence it passed into other Countries, so as to reach even the utmost Extremities of the North; the Venom, says my Author, was so contagious, as to infect even by the Sight. It was remarked, that it continued exactly five Months in every Country through which it passed. In those Places where it was most favourable, it left only a third of the Inhabitants, in most about a fifteenth, in some not above a twentieth Part. Can one conceive that an Exhalation should pass quite round the Globe, and produce such terrible Effects wherever it came, and shall we believe that Exhalations that are continually surrounding us, shall have no Effect at all? Or ought we to apprehend, that if such dreadful Feats can be wrought by stinking and noxious Exhalations, there is nothing nutritive or Salutary to be performed by those of an opposite Kind? I must confess, that I see no Ground for such a belief.

There is undoubtedly, as the learned *Bacon* lays it down, a healthy Sympathy, as well as a morbid Infection (*u*); and as, in spight of all the Care and Caution we

(*u*) See p. 64. in the Quotation from Bacon. If this Argument be not allowed, it will be hard to assign any rational Cause, why one Place should be more healthy than another; and to understand this Doctrine perfectly the Reader ought to consult Mr. Boyle's Treatise of the Wholesomeness and Unwholesomeness of the Air.

can take, we find it extremely hard to guard againſt, and to ward off the latter; ſo, by a Parity of Reaſon, it ſhould ſeem, that of all the Methods contributing to Health, the former ought to prove moſt efficacious: That is to ſay, we think there is no Way hitherto laid down for preſerving the Vigour of the Body, and thereby ſecuring ſuch a Supply of animal Spirits as may ſupport the Dominion of the Soul in its full Extent and Activity, ſo feaſible as this, which is ſuggeſted to be the Source of the Longevity and Healthfulneſs of *Hermippus*. For if inſenſible Perſpiration be made through the Pores, ſo that there is a continual Steam tranſpiring from every Body, then it follows, that where an old Man is conſtantly attended by many young Women, his Body muſt be ſurrounded with an infinite Quantity of the perſpirable Matter flowing from them, and if, on the other Hand, he not only perſpires through the Pores, but alſo receives by them, as has been already demonſtrated, the fineſt and moſt ſpirituous Particles of other Bodies into his own; then it is very evident, that ſuch an old Man muſt be, as I obſerved before, in ſuch a Situation, as will enable him to draw the greateſt poſſible Benefit from this moſt comfortable Medicine.

The more ſtrictly we conſider the Structure of the human Body, and the certain Cauſes of Health and Sickneſs, the more Reaſon we ſhall find to be ſatisfied with, and to acquieſce in the Syſtem we have laid down. Reaſon and Experience have convinced us, that the Body is a pneumatico-hydraulic Machine, compoſed of Fluids and Solids, and that a good Conſtitution, or healthy Diſpoſition, ariſes from the proper Motion of the one, and a due Circulation of the other. It is alſo no leſs certain, that this Motion, and this Circulation, depend reciprocally on each other. For as the Circulation is obſtructed, leſſened, and in ſome Meaſure ſtopped from

the

the Want of a proper Motion of the Solids, occasioned by their Loss of the true Tone and Texture which they ought to have; so this very Loss, on the other Hand, arises from their not receiving a timely and suitable Supply of Nutrition from the circulating Juices (*w*). Hence that Dryness, Stiffness, and Rigidity of the Fibres, which properly causes the Disease we call old Age; to prevent which, in a natural, rational, and physical Way, the only proper Method is, to provide a constant, equal, and effectual Supply of smooth balsamic and lubricating Particles from the circulating Fluids. If this could once be done, it is, I think, very apparent, that old Age could no more attack the human Body, than any other Disease, against which proper Precautions may be taken. But, as it is not to be expected that human Wisdom should be able to perfect such a Method, all that we can reasonably hope for, is to arrive at some Proficiency therein; so that though we are not able to prevent old Age, we may have it at least in our Power to retard it. It is in a Manner incredible, that by Art, a Man should be able to reach two or three hundred; but that he should live and enjoy Life to upwards of an hundred; the wisest of the Antients believed, and the Methods they perscribed and practised for this Purpose are all founded upon my Principles, as appears from their Use of Frictions, Baths, and Ointments, all of which had been idle and improper, if they had not conceived it possible to charge the Fluids, by means of them, with such Particles as were fit to repair the Losses of the Solids (*x*).

(*w*) Boerhaav. Instit. Medic. *Sect.* 1053, 1054. (*x*) Instead of citing Physicians, I shall refer the Reader to Plutarch's learned Treatise on Health and long Life, where, in a narrow Compass, he will see the Sense of the best Writers in Antiquity on this Subject.

Hermippus undoubtedly made uſe of a far more rational, as well as efficacious Medicine. For we have proved, by all the Methods that the Nature of our Argument will allow, the Particles reſpired and perſpired by young Perſons in full Health, to be the ſmootheſt. ſofteſt, and moſt nutritive that can be conceived. On the other hand, the Method he took in applying theſe, not only by receiving them in the Air every Time he drew Breath, but drawing them alſo in through all the Pores of his Body, by that Sort of animal Action, which is in a manner ſpontaneous, muſt have encreaſed their Effects, and taking this altogether, one cannot help conſidering him as a Perſon in a conſtant warm Bath of the moſt ſpirituous and unctuous Homours, which were continually pervading him, at the ſame Time, that by the Vapours of the young Peoples Breaths, he drank not ſo much Air as Life. But if we will add one Circumſtance further, and that not at all forced and improbable, *viz.* That he cauſed ſome of theſe young People to lie with him, as *David* did *Abiſhag*; we ſhall then carry the Medicine to its higheſt Pitch, and ſhall eaſily apprehend, that during that Time of free and copious Perſpiration, he muſt have received ſuch a large Supply of Nutritive Spirits, as effectually refreſhed his Nature, and reſtored, in a great Meaſure, that waſte which is occaſioned by performing the ordinary Functions of Life (*y*).

We may add the laſt Degree of Force to this Manner of reaſoning, if we may be permitted to argue from contraries. What is more common than to ſee a Woman advanced in Years grow not only briſk and lively, but ſtrong and healthy, by marrying a young Husband.

(*y*) The Opinions of many learned Phyſicians might have been cited in ſupport of this Doctrine, if we had not been afraid of tiring the Reader too much; but if he is extreamly inquiſitive, he may conſult the following Writers. Chriſtian. Forman. de Faſcinat, Magic. p. 1014. Borellus Cent. iii Obſervat. 28. Lan. de motu Tranſpirat. lib. ii. cap. ii. prop. iv. p. 56.

She drinks his Breath, exhales his Spirits, extracts his Moiſture, and thereby invigorates herſelf, while the poor Man ſuffers from the impure Contagion of her Breath and Vapours, and, from the Malignity of this ill-choſen Union, ſinks very quickly into apparent Weakneſs, and falls at laſt into what the common People call a galloping Conſumption. Strange! that the Death of a young Man ſhould reſult from his Marriage with an old Woman, and that the taking of a young Wife ſhould repair the Waſte, and prolong the Life of an old Man (z). Yet, ſo it is, and upon this Subject I will venture to ſet down a remarkable Inſtance from the Writings of an unexceptionable Witneſs, one, whoſe Repute for Veracity is as well eſtabliſhed, as his Fame, for Learning in general, and for his particular Skill in Phyſic.

The Perſon I mean is *Peter Lotichius*, and the Example he gives us, this; A Man upwards of eighty Years old married, after the Loſs of his firſt Wife, a ſecond, who was but twenty-five; when they had been married about a Year, he fell into a very extraordinary and dangerous Diſtemper; he grew at laſt ſo weak and low, that his Caſe was judged to be deſperate. By degrees, however, he grew better, and as his ſtrength encreaſed, his grey Hair and white Beard fell off gradually, and his Skin began likewiſe to peel; ſoon after, a light ſtrong Hair began to peep through the Skin of his Head, which in time fell down to his Shoulders in ſtrong natural Curls. His Beard came in the ſame Manner, and his Face acquired a beautiful and florid Complexion; in a Word, he became again a ſound, luſty, and, if the Expreſſion may be allowed, a young Man, which his

(z) The Author has very judiciouſly omitted any Inſtance of this Kind, probably for two Reaſons; firſt, becauſe every Man's Memory may ſupply him with Examples; and ſecondly to avoid ſaying too much on a Subject offenſive to the Fair Sex.

Wife

Wife was forced to atteſt, ſince ſhe had by him afterwards ſeveral fine Boys (*a*). This is an Inſtance much to my Purpoſe, ſince it proves the prodigious Efficacy of human Breath, and the Matter perſpired by a juvenile Body. Yet give me leave to obſerve, that this extraordinary Effort of Nature might poſſibly contribute to ſhorten the old Man's Life, who, without the Enjoyment of this young Woman, might have preſerved his Conſtitution many Years, and have lived in the perfect Fruition of thoſe Pleaſures peculiar to the Mind, and for the Enjoyment of which it ſeems moſt rational that Life ſhould be prolonged.

There is ſomething of the ſame Kind obſerveable in the well known Hiſtory of the famous *Engliſh* Long-liver *Thomas Parre*, and theſe Particulars are very curiouſly diſtinguiſhed by the great Anatomiſt *Bartholin*, who ſet down his Account of him, not as a Curioſity to pleaſe Children, but as a ſingular and memorable Fact, worthy of the Attention and Conſideration of Men. This *Parre*, was born at *Winnington*, in the County of *Salop*, in 1483, and paſſed his Youth in very hard Labour, and, which is as remarkable, in Sobriety and Chaſtity. At fourſcore, he married his firſt Wife *Jane*, by whom he had two Children, neither of which were long-lived, or ſhewed any extraordinary Signs of Strength; the firſt died at the Age of a Month, and the ſecond lived but a few Years. At an. 102 he became enamoured of *Katharine Milton*, whom he got with Child, and did Pennance in the Church for it. Some Months before he died, the Earl of *Arundel* brought him up to *London*, and preſented him to King *Charles* I. but through the change of the Air, and in Living, he died ſoon after; though it was believed he might have ſurvived many

(*a*) Obſervat: Medic. lib. iv Obſerv. 3.

Years,

Years, if he had remained in his own Country, and led the same Life he was wont to do (*b*). This Man was over-grown with Hair, and during the latter Part of his Life, slept very much. In the same Country lived the famous Countess of *Desmond*, whose Age was unknown to herself, but extremely well supported by the Authority of others; since from Deeds, Settlements, and other disputable Testimonies, it appear'd clearly, that she was upwards of an hundred and forty, according to the Computation of the great Lord *Bacon*, who knew her personally, and remarks this Particularity about her, that she thrice changed her Teeth (*c*). We have it on the Credit of *Alexander Benedictus*, that there was a Lady of his Acquaintance, who, at the Age of Fourscore, had a complete new Sett of Teeth, and, though her Hair had all fallen off before, yet, at the same time she cut her Teeth, it grew again, of like Colour and Strength as at first (*d*). *Bartholin*, the famous Anatomist, whom I cited before, furnishes us not only with another Example, and informs us, it was procured by Art, but gives us also the Receipt by which it was done, and which he assures us was no other than an Extract of black Hellebore, dissolved in an Infusion of Wine and Roses (*e*). If I mistake not, the illustrious *Boyle* hath something to the same Purpose about the Quintessence of *Balm* (*f*).

If we consider these extraordinary Relations attentively, and reflect on the Weight of Evidence, with which some of them, and especially those of *Parre*, and the

(*b*) Bartholin. Hist. Anatom. cent. v. hist. 28. p. 47, 48. Some Accounts make Parre much older, and place his Death in 1651; I have consulted his Monument in Westminster-Abby, and there I find he died on the 15th of November, 1635, aged upwards of 152; when his Body was opened, his Bowels appeared very sound, only the Lungs were somewhat injured, which was thought to be owing to the Grossness of the Town-air, and that he might have lived much longer, if on his first Complaint he had been let Blood

the Countess of *Desmond*, are supported, we must be satisfied, that the human Body is a Machine capable of very extraordinary Changes. For we ought to consider, that if we are once brought to believe, that a Woman thrice changed her Teeth, it is as clear a Proof of the Possibility of the Fact, as if we had twenty other Examples. Now, if there be a Possibility of renovating human Nature, why, on the one Side, should we not study it? Or why, on the other, should this kind of Study be treated as a vain and fanciful Thing? If the Office of a Physician be honourable; if there be something Noble and God-like in curing Diseases, in stopping the Progress of Pain and Misery, and warding off the Dart of Death, for a few Years; there is certainly something much more excellent in the Art of renewing the human Body; securing Health and Vigour, thro' a long Course of Years; keeping not only Death, but his younger Brethern, Age and Decripitness, at a distance. Let us remember upon this Occasion, what I have already cited from the learned Monk *Bacon*; what, says he, if *Aristotle*, *Plato*, *Hippocrates* and *Galen*, were ignorant of this Secret; Is that a Proof that we shall not attain it? Were they not ignorant of many other Secrets that are now commonly known; why then should we imagine the Barrier of Science fixed here, rather than any where else? Why should we not find out the Means of prolonging Life, as well as a Method for squaring the Circle? Is not the former of as great Conseqence to us as Men? Or is the latter a more useful Proof of the Strength of human Understanding? Let us proceed

Blood (*c*) Verulam. Hist. vitæ et Mortis. Sir Walter Raleigh's History of the World. lib I. cap. v. §. 5. (*d*) Donat. Hist. Med. mirab. lib. VI. c. 2. p. 300, (*e*) Hist. Anatomic. cent. v. hist. 28. p. 51 (*f*) See his Treatise on Specific Remedies. As to the Medicine its self it was contrived by Paracelsus.

then;

then; let us collect and compare (since the Nature of the thing forbids other Experiments) such Examples as we meet with in authentic Histories; and let us in this, as in other Cases, endeavour to convert History into Science, by observing nicely the Particulars in every Relation, and endeavour thereby to trace out the Manner of Nature's working; for if this can be once done, we shall be soon able to follow her Steps. If Nature at any time vouchsafes this Favour to Men, it follows, that their Bodies have no Incapacity of receiving it; that is to say, if every Man's Body was not so constituted, as to exceed by far the ordinary Limits of Life, it could not possibly happen that any Man's Life should be so extended.

Father *Maffeus*, who wrote a celebrated History of the *Indies*, which has been always esteem'd a perfect Model in point of Veracity, as well as the Elegance of its Composition, gives us the following Account, after having related the Death of the Sultan of *Cambaya*, and the Conquest of his Kingdom by the *Portugueze*. " They presented, says he, at this Time to the Gene-
" ral, a Man born amongst the ancient *Gangarids*, who
" are now called *Bengalors*, who was 335 Years of
" Age. There were various Circumstances which took
" from this Account all Suspicion of Falshood. In the
" first Place, his Age was confirmed by a kind of uni-
" versal Tradition, all the People averring that the
" oldest Men in their Infancy spoke of this Man's Age
" with Astonishment; and this old Man had then liv-
" ing in his own House, a Son of ninety Years old. In
" the next Place his Ignorance was so great, and he
" was so absolutely void of Learning, that this remov-
" ed all ground of Doubt, for by the strength of his Me-
" mory he was a kind of living Chronicle, relating dis-
" tinctly, and exactly, whatever had happened within

" the Compass of his Life, together with all the Circumstances relating to it. He had often lost and renewed his Teeth; his Hair, both on his Head and Beard, grew insensibly grey, and then as insensibly turned black again. The first Age of his Life he passed in Idolatry; but for the two last Centuries of his Life, had been a *Mohammedan*. The Sultan had allowed him a Pension for his Subsistance, the continuance of which he begged from the General; the same Motive remaining, which had first induced the King of *Cambaya* to grant him a Subsistance, that is to say, his great Age, and the extraordinary Circumstances that had attended his Life, these prevailed on the General to grant his Request (*g*)." Thus far *Maffeus*.

But as it may be very easily conceived, that so strange a Story as this must have created many Enquiries, and have either sunk in the World, or, in consequence of those Enquiries, received Abundance of concurring Testimonies; I shall therefore beg Leave to add some very remarkable Particulars in relation to this celebrated Long-liver, from the *Portuguese* Historian *Ferdinand Lopez de Castegneda*, who was Historiographer Royal. He tells us, that, in the Year 1536, there was a Man present to the Vice-roy of the *Indies*, *Nunio de Cugna*, who was near 340 Years old. He remembered that he had seen the City in which he dwelt, and which was then one of the most populous in the *Indies*, a very inconsiderable Place. He had changed his Hair and recovered his Teeth four Times, and, when the Vice-roy saw him, his Head and Beard were black, but the Hair weak and thin. He asserted, that in the Course of his Life he had seven hundred Wives, some of which died, and the rest he had put away. The King of *Portugal* caused a

(*g*) Historiarum Indicarum lib. xi. c. 4.

strict

ſtrict Enquiry to be made into this Matter, and an annual Account of the State of the old Man's Health, brought him by the Returns of the Fleet from *India*. This long-lived Perſon was a Native of the Kingdom of *Bengala*, and died at the Age of 370 (*h*). This Hiſtory is in itſelf very curious, founded upon good Authority, and therefore tranſcribed from the Authors I have mentioned by many curious and inquiſitive Perſons, who were alſo proper Judges of this Nature, and who have none of them intimated any Doubt or Suſpicion as to the Matters of Fact (*i*), I therefore ſubmit it to the Reader's Conſideration, whether it be not a Matter worthy of Reflection, that there is a certain Strength in the human Body, which, aſſiſted by ſome luckly Circumſtances, enables it to renovate itſelf, ſometimes once, as in the Caſe mentioned by *Lotichius*, ſometimes oftner, as in that of the Counteſs of *Deſmond*, who bred all her Teeth thrice; and this Native of *Bengala*, who changed his Hair and Teeth four times; and there is another Circumſtance of which I cannot but take Notice, as it favours my Doctrine very much; that this Man, who lived to an Age much greater than any, which we have by good Authority, had ſo many Wives, to the Efficacy of whoſe Breaths, and the inſenſible Effluvia of their wholeſome Bodies, I ſhould not ſcruple to attribute, in a great Meaſure, his extraordinary Longevity. Theſe, I ſay, are Points which deſerve to be conſider'd; ſince, if ſuch a Power there be in the human Conſtitution, we ought not to deſpair of finding out Methods, which may contribute to its manifeſting its ſelf more frequently; which would be certainly a far greater Benefit to Mankind than the bare Study of the proper Remedies for u-

(*h*) Hiſt. Luſitan. lib. viii. (*i*) Bartholini Hiſt. Anatom. cent. v. hiſt. 28. p. 46. Camer. hor. Subciſ. cent. II. c. 8. p. 378. Hakewill's Apol p. 168.

sual and common Distempers. Let me add, that perhaps if such a Method could be found, it must also defend from almost all Diseases, by procuring such a Vigour, as should not permit the Entrance of them.

I have hitherto declined speaking of long-lived Animals, upon which, however, the great Lord *Bacon* has insisted much. *Apollonius*, if we may believe the Writer of his Life, discovered in Mount *Caucasus* an extraordinary Secret in natural History. There are Apes there, it seems, which feed upon a Kind of Pepper, and these Apes are eaten by old Lyons, to renew their Strength and make them young (*k*). I must confess, I suspect this to be rather an Allegory, than a Fable, and I should incline to interpret it thus; that lofty and ambitious Spirits over-act the Bodies in which they inhabit, and induce a premature old Age; if this Effect be not prevented by frequently unbending their Spirits in the Company of humorous and diverting People, who are well enough marked out by Apes well seasoned. Thus *Agesilaus*, the famous King of *Sparta*, when he was extremely old, amused himself by playing with young Children. The great *Scipio* diverted himself in the Company of *Terence*, and *Augustus* had always about him the most sprightly Wits of *Rome*. Cardinal *Richlieu* had sunk under the Fatigues of his Ministry, if, from Time to Time he had not been relieved by the humorous Buffoonry of *Boisrobert*. *Lewis* XIV. was as delicate in his Amusements, as great in his Councils, and shewed as true Judgment in approving a Play of *Moliere*'s, as a Project of *Louvois*'s. We are not therefore to understand the Antients literally, when they deliver to us those Stories which appear to us incredible. But to return to long-lived Animals.

(*k*) Philostrat. in vit. Apollon. Tyan. lib. iv. c. i.

It is certain, that Eagles arrive at a great Age, and that they preserve, almost as long as they live, that prodigious Strength which distinguishes them from other Birds. We know too, that the Eagle renews his Plumage annually, and it is not easy to conceive how this should be done without a total Change of its Juices. The Stag is another long-lived Animal, though I cannot believe many of the Stories that are told about it. I mention it only that I may observe, that annually it casts its Horns, which is another Proof of the Renewal of animal Juices. But this is still more conspicuous in the Viper, which in the Spring casts its Coat, and comes abroad youthful as the Year. If the Eagle, the Stag, and the Viper were not common to every Climate, I make no doubt that the Facts related of them would be treated as Fables; but as they happen every Day, and under our Eyes, we are obliged to own them for Truths. Yet, what Use have we made of these Truths? Who can assign the Causes why these Animals live longer than others; or, how it comes to pass, that Nature grants them this Privilege of Rejuvenescency? Yet such an Enquiry might repay our Industry abundantly (*l*). It is said that we learned Physic from Animals, that Dogs taught us the Use of Emetics, and that Birds put us in head of Clysters. If they were our Tutors in the lower Part of Physic, why should we disdain their Instructions in this sublimer Part of that Science?

It is not only the Inhabitants of the Land and Air who attain to such vast Ages; such as dwell in the Waters seem to have yet a larger Share of Life, of which I will give one well attested Instance out of many. In the Year 1497, in a Fish-pond in *Suabia*, near *Huilprin* in *Germany*, they took a Carp of a prodigious Size,

(*l*) Aldrovand. Ornitholog. Gesner. de avibus lib. iii. Aristot. de animalibus.

which

which had in his Ear a Ring of Copper, with these Words in Latin. I am the first Fish that was put into this Pond by the Hands of *Frederick* II. Governor of the World, the 5th of *October*, 1230. This Carp appeared to have lived 259 Years, and probably might have lived much longer, had he not been taken out. I cannot apprehend, that much Use will ever be made of Examples of this Sort, because Fishes live in another Medium, and seem to have their Lives regulated by Laws different from those of other Animals (*m*). We may say of them, that if they do not, like the Eagle, renew their Vigour, yet they seem never to grow old, or to express myself more clearly, Age with them seems exempt from Infirmities. The broken Claw of a Lobster grows again, which, if seriously considered, is very wonderful; and it is generally believed, that most Fishes grow as long as they live, which, if true, is not easily accounted for.

What I would infer from all these Hints is no more than this, that Nature has furnished us with numerous Examples of what we seek, long Life with the Preservation of Youth. We see this daily in Birds and in Beasts, in Fish and in Reptiles, and yet we sit down satisfied, that speedy old Age, and premature Death, belong to us by the Law of Nature. Where is the Justice, where is the Consistency of this; especially, if we consider, that the Flesh of many long-lived Animals has a Quality wonderfully restorative? We know that mighty Things have been done by feeding upon Vipers, and not much less by living upon Shell-Fish; the Bone of a Stag's Heart is held to be a very high Cordial, the Reason of which is something singular, and therefore I will take Notice of it (*n*). This Bone is the strongest Proof of

(*m*) Joinston. Hist. Nat. (*n*) This Bone of a Stag's Heart enters into all the Receipts of Bacon the Monk, as well as into all those that are mentioned by the Arabian Physicians; and as they ranscribe Greek Authors, it is easy to see, that this Medicine was f great Antiquity.

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the Stag's Longevity, for it is nothing elſe but the Root of the Aorta, grown bonny through a long Series of Years. We are therefore in the wrong to take it for granted, that Nature has paſſed ſuch a Sentence upon us, when the Record of Experience proves directly the contrary, and when we ſo plainly ſee that the Seeds of long Life are in long-lived Creatures. But we paſs this Sentence and execute it upon ourſelves. We ſit down not patient, but dejected, under what we eſteem a common Calamity, and deſire rather to make the moſt of a ſhort Life, than to fatigue ourſelves with the Study of the Means by which it may be prolonged.

I had almoſt forgot an Objection which has been ſtarted from a ſuppoſed Law of Nature, with reſpect to Animals, *viz.* That thoſe have their appointed Times, and that moſt of them are but of very ſhort Periods; the great Lord *Bacon* hath taken much Pains to make this out, though with a better View than the ſupporting ſuch an Objection, but after all, I very much doubt the Matter of Fact, *viz.* That there are any ſuch immutable Laws, that Animals cannot tranſgreſs. For Inſtance, it is ſaid, that the Age of a Horſe, I mean his extreme Age, is twenty or twenty-four; Hiſtory furniſhes us with Inſtances that contradicts this. I will mention but one: *Mezeray* tells us, that a certain Duke of *Gaſcoigny* paid his Homage to the King of *Burgundy* on a Horſe that was an hundred Years old, and which was ſtill vigorous and full of Mettle (*o*). But admitting the Matter of Fact, where lies the Force of the Objection? Some Animals reach ten, and others it is confeſſed, live much beyond a hundred; what has this to do with the Life of Man? why ſhould it prove, that we are ſtinted to Fourſcore, more than that we have it in our Power to live as long as Stags and Eagles. It may be ſaid, that

(*o*) Hiſtoire abregé de France, tom. i. p. 401.

there is a certain Gradation in these Periods, and that as each Animal has its assigned Term, so likewise has Man. But we proved the contrary of this, by all the Methods of Argumentation yet invented; we shewed it from Scripture, from Reason, from Experience; and if all this is not sufficient to baffle a Notion founded only on Fancy, why, let those who are fond of it enjoy it. I do not think that Life ought to be forced upon People; my Creed goes no further than this, *That if we seek we may find, if we knock it will be opened*; and this I am led to say, because I find it so in other Pursuits, where Men follow Nature, and not their own Notions. What mighty Discoveries has the *Newtonian* Philosophy afforded, which had been for ever hid from Men, if they had continued to follow the Visions of *Descartes*? How much more certain the Astronomy of our Times, than that of our Ancestors? Yet some say, that all these Discoveries are only lost Truths revived. Be it so, and let us return to the Search of that Truth which was known to *Hermippus*, and which has been so long lost to us.

If, therefore, after all that has been said, there remain yet any Doubts upon the Mind of the Reader, we shall endeavour by all Means to remove these, as well for the Sake of his Satisfaction, as that, after so much Pains already taken, we may not fail in our Attempt, and have this Dissertation considered only as a literary Amusement; whereas, we intend it as a serious and useful Discourse. The Antients, who seem to have studied this Matter with the greatest Assiduity, and whose Opinions, generally speaking, on mature Examination, appear not altogether unreasonable to the Moderns, observe with respect to the Causes of old Age, that they are chiefly three. First, the circumambient Air, which drys up the natural Moisture in Man, at the same Time, that the innate

Heat

Heat of the Body consumes it, as the necessary Substance on which the Flame of Life must feed. The second is the Toil and Motion of the Body, which likewise wastes that aerial Humidity which is so necessary to Health and Life; the last is the Passions of the Mind, which, according to the Sentiments of the learned *Avicenna*, have greater Influence than both the other Causes taken together, which will seem extremely reasonable, if we consider how close a Connection there is between the Passions of the Mind, and the Motion of the animal Spirits, which particularly appears in Madness, when we compare the Circumstances attending it, as a Disease of the Mind, with those by which it also appears to be a bodily Distemper.

Such as are acquainted with that mysterious Kind of Philosophy, which was in the highest Credit with the learned Vulgar of the last Age, and which is now as unreasonably discredited amongst the same People, and regarded only by such as enquire after Truths, and not received Opinions; this Philosophy, I say, teaches us, that there is a great Correspondence between the Body of the Earth, and the Body of Man, whence the Patrons of this Doctrine were wont to call the latter the little World, and the former the great one. Now, though there is something very fanciful in their way of treating this Matter, yet the Notion in itself is very just, and whoever examines it carefully will find, that the general Laws of the Universe, are also the particular Laws of all the different Kind of Bodies in it; and hence it comes to pass, that as Man suffers and is destroyed for want of Moisture, so this is like to be the Case of the World too, or at least would be the Case, if it did not receive foreign Supplies; which the judicious Sir *Isaac Newton* supposes it does from the Tails of Comets, the

watery Vapours of which, he imagines, communicate with our Atmosphere for that Purpose (*p*).

This we must allow to be a rational, and probable Account of what for many Ages puzzled the Understanding of all Mankind; and if so wonderful a Method as this is be necessary to supply the Earth with Moisture, why should we think it strange, that a new, and in some Measure, unaccustomed Way, should be the fittest for repairing that Humidity, which is so necessary to the well-being of the human Body. The Universe is under the special Care and Direction of its infinite wise Creator, who at certain Seasons therefore has provided it with such requisite Supplies; but the Bodies of Men are in this respect left to their own Care, and if the Materials be within our own Reach, and our Faculties are strong enough to discover them, we have no more a Right to complain, that the Secret of preserving long Life is not discovered to us, than that the Art of baking Bread, of melting Ores, and refining Metals, or indeed any other Art, was not revealed to our Ancestors in the earliest Ages of the World, but left to be the Reward of their Industry and Sagacity. The Furniture of Man's Mind, and the Structure of his Body, are both of them such, that if he has any Reason to complain, it must be of himself; and his Reflections upon Providence are not only impious, but ridiculous. He has it absolutely in his Power to be easy, and happy if he pleases. Health will always attend on Temperance steadily pursued, as *Galen* asserts in his Works, and manifested in himself, by living to upwards of a hundred, without being attacked either by acute or chronic Diseases. Riches are not indeed within every Man's Reach, but there is something always at hand infinitely more valuable than Wealth, I mean Content. If to these Blessings we would

(*p*) Philosoph. Natural. Princip. Mathem. lib. iii.

add

add Length of Days, why that, according to this Hypothesis, is in our Power, and depends on our finding out a proper Supply of the aerial Humidity before-mentioned.

We have now the Clue in our Hand, and nothing can hinder us from extricating ourselves from this Labyrinth of Doubts about the proper Method of obtaining this Supply, but our own Negligence and Want of Attention. We ought to remember that Heat and Moisture are, from the very Beginning, the Principles of human Life. Let us reflect then, and see if we cannot discover whence these Principles arise. There is, I think, very little Difficulty in this Case, that of Heat is derived from the Male, that of Moisture from the Female. It is equally unnecessary and unbecoming me to introduce a Treatise of Generation in a Work like this; it is sufficient that I put my Readers in mind, that the Enlargement of the Foetus in the Womb requires a very extraordinary Degree of Moisture in all Respects, and that this is entirely derived to it from its Mother. The Growth of an Infant is surprizingly quick, and this is owing to the Strength of the Vital Flame, the constant Supply of a proper Humidity, and the not being exposed to those Accidents which have been before-mentioned, I mean the Action of the circumambient Air, bodily Motion, and the Passions of the Mind; from all which, Children, while in the Womb, are in a great Measure free. This I think is so extremely clear and plain, that it is simply impossible for a Man to be in any Perplexity about it; and therefore I shall proceed to the next Stage of Life, and enquire into the Method which is therein pursued by Nature.

In the State of Infancy, there is likewise an extraordinary Provision necessary of this humid Matter, not only sufficient for performing the ordinary Functions of animal Life, but also to facilitate the Growth of the Child,

and this too proceeds from the Mother. Nature has furnished her with Breasts, and with Milk, which is the most suitable Nutriment, that, under such Circumstances, the human Body can receive; and in extreme old Age, when the Body is a second Time reduced to the Feebleness of Infancy, Milk, and especially Womens Milk, is found to be of very great Use, and in consumptive Cases also, is allowed to be a most admirable Restorative. Hence I think it plainly appears, that the radical Moisture, so necessary to supply the Flame of Life, and to keep it not only alive, but vigorous and clear, is to be sought in Woman. I foresee one great Objection that may be made to this, *viz.* That I insist not on the Breath or Effluvia of Women, but of Virgins, Yet weigh the Cases thoroughly, and you will find all that I have advanced very consistent. The Nourishment of a Child in the Womb, and an Infant at the Breast, is a Nourishment no way fit for Persons in Years, and therefore I approve what *Bacon* delivers from the *Arabian* Physicians, *viz.* That Milk is an improper Diet for old Men. This hinders not its being useful, when People are quite worn out, for that may furnish Strength to a dying Flame, that would not advantage a Lamp in its ordinary Situation. Persons in the last Stage of Life are frequently emaciated, and, in this Case, Milk may help; but still there is a wide Difference between the natural and gradual Decay of the human Body, and what the Physicians call a Consumption; there must be consequently a Difference in their Cure. Thus from certain, and almost self-evident Principles, I have established the Reasonableness of this Proposition, that the Breath and insensible Perspiration of Virgins, in a young and healthy State, must be very salutary for old Men, and may very probably be a Means of protecting them from those Infirmities, which usually attend an advanced Age.

Now

Now, in reſpect to this, it matters not at all, whether the Inſcription I ſet out with be founded in Truth or not, neither is it requiſite to believe that I have hit exactly on the Method uſed by *Hermippus*. The ſingle Point in Queſtion is, whether I have ſhown that Senſe,in which I take this Inſcription, to be agreable to the Dictates of Reaſon, and the Laws of Nature; and as to this every Reader muſt decide for himſelf. Before he does this, there is another Sort of Evidence that he ought to hear, and which, for the Sake of Truth, I ſhall readily produce.

There are two Sorts of People whoſe Intereſt it is particularly to decry this Doctrine, on a Suppoſition that it is deſtructive of their own, to which they are prodigiouſly, and perhaps unreaſonably addicted: I mean the Aſtrologers and Hermetic Philoſophers. I ſhall examine what both may object, rather for the Entertainment and Satisfaction, than for the Conviction of the wiſer Part of the World, who are already well enough apprized of the Credit due to theſe Virtuoſi; and when I have done this, I ſhall draw to a ſpeedy Concluſion, from an Aſſurance that nothing more can be neceſſary to eſtabliſh the Probability of this Method for preſerving Health and Life, and for defending our Bodies from the Infirmities of old Age, as long as their Conſtitutions will permit.

The modern Patrons of Aſtrology, for ſuch it ſeems there are, will probably pretend, that this Notion of *Hermippus* was a mere Fancy, and that if he really reached to an Age ſo advanced, it was not through the Aſſiſtance derived from the Breath of Virgins, but from the happy Poſition of the heavenly Bodies at the Time of his Birth. It is, however, lucky for me, that they can never make good this Objection, becauſe I preſume their Art will not furniſh them with the Means of conſtructing any Scheme of his Nativity. I know they may

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plead the Authority of *Thomas Aquinas* (q), and other great Men who have given into these Opinions. I know too, that they may produce some extraordinary Instances of the Verification of astrological Predictions; particularly those of *Basil*, who was so famous at *Florence*, and of *La Brosse* at *Paris*, who were particularly happy in guessing at future Events, and in having their Predictions recorded by Historians of Credit.

The former of these foretold to *Cosmo de Medici*, then a private Citizen at *Florence*, that he would attain some very high Dignity, in as much as the Ascendent of his Nativity was adorned with the same propitious Aspects, as those of the Emperors *Augustus*, and *Charles* V. had been; and he was accordingly raised to the Dukedom of *Tuscany*, in the Month of *January* 1434 (r). The same *Greek* Astrologer did, with equal Capacity, foretel the Death of Prince *Alex. de Medici*, and this with such Confidence, as to paint out the Person by whose Hand he should die, and whom he affirmed to be that Prince's intimate and familiar Friend, of a slender habit of Body, a small Face, and swarthy Complexion, and who, with a reserved Silence, was almost insociable to all Persons in the Court; by which Description he did almost point out with the Finger *Laurence de Medici*, who murder'd Prince *Alexander* in his Bed-chamber, contrary to all the Laws of Consanguinity and Hospitality, in the Year 1537 (s). But the great Misfortune is, that in those Days it was shrewdly suspected, that these pretended Sages had better and more certain Methods of penetrating into Conspiracies, than are afforded

(q) One strong Passage, among many in his Writings, runs thus. Qui sciret virtutes Cælorum & Stellarum, dum res aliqua nascitur, posset judicare de natura rei, licet hoc necessitatem non imponat, & posset impediri per accidens. D. Tho. Secundo de Generatione.
(r) Dinoth. Memorab. lib. vi. p. 390. (s) Jovii, Elog. p. 320.

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by astrological Means; and I must confess myself inclined to suspect, from the very Manner in which this Prediction was delivered, that *Basil* was employed to caution Prince *Alexander* against his Cousin *Laurence*, and that, for want of Penetration, he fell into that Snare which he might otherwise have avoided.

The Instance of *La Brosse* is more to the Purpose, because better supported; indeed I think that it is the best attested Story of its Kind. The Baron *de Biron*, afterwards the famous Marshal of that Name, being under some Difficulty about a Duel, went to *La Brosse*, and carried him a Scheme of his Nativity, but told him it was that of a Friend of his; the Astrologer, having considered the Scheme, assured him, that the Person, whose Nativity it was, would infallibly be a great Man; nay, that he might even come to be a King, but for the *Caput Algol*, pointing to the Figure of the Dragon's Head in the Scheme. M. *de Biron*, who did not understand the Term, insisted on a clearer Account; why then, replied *La Brosse*, through a Desire of being a King, this Man will do something that will cost him his Head. Provoked at which Answer, the Baron beat him unmercifully; but he lived to fulfill his Prediction, having his Head cut off, as all the World knows, for a Conspiracy against *Henry* IV. (*t*).

Howmuch soever these Sort of Notions have been discountenanced by the prevailing of Experimental Philosophy, and true Science; yet, where a Prince gives ear to his own Praises, there will never be wanting such as will adopt astrological Schemes, as well as other Things, to flatter his Vanity. Nothing is easier than to give such a Turn to a Piece of this Nature; Men of sprightly Parts know how to dress up the Face of Heaven upon such an Occasion, and to dispose properly of all

(*t*) Invent. Gen. de France, par M. de Serres, p. 1051.

all the Signs and Planets, so as to raise mighty Expectations in the World, as well as the highest Pleasure in the Mind of the Prince they flatter.

Such were the favourable Influences of the celestial Orbs, at the Birth of the late *Lewis* XIV. King of *France*. The Genethliac System may be seen in one of the Medals that compose the History of that Reign. The Gentlemen of the Royal Academy of Inscriptions have observed the precise Position of the Planets, at the Moment of the Birth of that Prince; round about this curious Medal, one sees the twelve Signs of the *Zodiac*, forming the twelve Houses of this System; the seven Planets appear in the same Degrees they occupied at that Time; the Sun, which gives Perfection to the other Planets, is in the mid-Heaven; *Mars*, the Lord of the Ascendent, in reception with *Jupiter*, the Protector of Life, and this is what they call the greater Fortune; *Saturn*, the Enemy of Nature, is in his Dignities, which makes him less malevolent; the *Moon* is in conjunction with *Venus*; and *Mercury*, in his little House of Predilection, to ten Degrees of the Sun, out of Cumbustion, and, enlightened by his Rays, gives a Superiority of Genius in the most difficult and most important Enterprizes, which his being in Quartile with *Mars*, is not capable to abate. The Nativity of *Lewis* XIV. was figured in the Middle of the Medal, by a rising Sun, the King is placed in the Chariot of that glorious Planet of which *Ovid* has given us the Description. This Chariot is drawn by four Horses, guided by *Victory*, the Inscription is in these Words, Ortus Solis Gallici, *The Rising of the Gallic Sun*; and the Exergue contains these other *Latin* Words, Septembris quinto, minutis 38 ante Meridiem, 1638. *The 5th of September*, 38 *Minutes before Noon*, 1638.

I

I must confess that this is a pretty Contrivance, and ingeniously put together; yet I dare say, that none of the learned Gentlemen, concerned in framing this Medal, ventured to predict any of the Clouds that obscured their Sun. No, they were too great Courtiers for that. But if this famous Medal give any Reputation to Astrology, I shall venture to lay down a few Observations which will free my Doctrine from all Inconveniencies. I observe then, that as the happiest Nativities admit of natural Causes to co-operate in bringing about what they portend, so it is not at all improbable, that if by some happy Accident we could gain a Sight of the Horoscope of *Hermippus*, it would shew us, that *Mercury*, well posited at the Time of his Birth, and beheld by *Luna* with a favourable Aspect, caused his Discovery of this mighty Secret, and enabled him to make such a Use of the Breath of Virgins, that no Man ever thought of before. If the Astrologers are content to grant me this, I am willing to compromise the Matter, and, which I think is as much as they can expect, to allow this Doctrine to be derived from the Stars. But, if they are so tenacious of their own Notions, as not to accept of so fair an Offer, I shall recur to my first Principles, and deny absolutely the Certainty of their Art, and demand as good Reasons for the Credit of Astrology, as I have produced in favour of my own System, before I enter the Lists with them. Affirmation is nothing in this Age, wherein Men expect Proofs for every Thing. Let them shew us then, that they can predict an Earthquake, Whirlwind, or so much as an Irruption of Mount *Etna*; nay, let them but mark the rainy, and fair Days for a whole Year in any Climate in *Europe*, and I will be content, that their Assertions weigh down my Evidence, and that the long Life of *Hermippus* shall be ascribed to a happy Conjunction of humid Stars, in

the Sign *Virgo*, which was the Interpretation once offered me by a learned Aſtrologer of this Inſcription, and which, together with my own Sentiments, I freely ſubmit to the Judgment of the impartial Reader.

Such as ſeek after Truth diſguiſe nothing, and are ſo far from being afraid of ſeeing their Opinion canvaſſed, and even refuted, that on the contrary, nothing pleaſes them better, becauſe they are ſtill Gainers by the Diſpute; ſince, when Truth is once diſcovered, they have as much Right to it as he who found it. In the preſent Caſe, if this Treatiſe of mine ſhould ſtir up any wiſer Man to look for a better Solution of the Problem I have ſtated, and he ſhould luckily fall on the genuine Method of *Hermippus*, he could not rejoice at it more than I, nor would he find any one more willing to own, or applaud his Ingenuity. Let us read, let us meditate, let us diſpute, but all for the ſake of Truth, which is the great Property of Mankind, conſtitutes all our Happineſs, and which it is therefore our common Intereſt to purſue. The Point I have now in view, is to diſcover the Means of prolonging Life, without feeling the Infirmities of Age; to the Diſcovery of which, if the Publication of this Treatiſe any way contribute, not my End only, but the End of Mankind is anſwered, and a moſt noble Point of Science will be illuſtrated, from what many might at firſt eſteem an idle Diſpute.

I ſhall not treat the Hermetic Philoſophers altogether ſo briskly as I have done the Aſtrologers; becauſe, without doubt, there have been amongſt them, many very excellent Perſons. I cannot take upon me to ſay when they began to lay claim to the Univerſal Medicine, by which they pretend to preverſe Life for many Centuries at leaſt, of which they ſay *Artephius* was an Inſtance, who lived by the Uſe of it to the Age of 300,

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or, as ſome ſay, near 1000. This is certain, that the Society of the *Roſicrucians* openly claimed it as one of the Privileges of their illuſtrious Body. *Peter Mormius*, who for ought I know, was one of the laſt of them that appeared in publick, reduced their high Pretenſions, which at firſt were very extenſive, to the Poſſeſſion of three Secrets. Of theſe, the firſt was the Perpetual Motion; the ſecond, the Art of tranſmuting Metals; and the third, the Univerſal Medicine. In the Book publiſhed by this *Mormius*, there are Abundance of curious Things, though he does not ſufficiently explain himſelf, eſpecially upon the laſt Subject (*u*). It is, however, well enough known, that theſe *Illuminati* aſſerted, that they had a Power of prolonging their Lives for many Ages; nor is it very clear from their Writings, whether, what they are pleaſed to call the Philoſopher's Stone, be not at once the great Secret of Tranſmutation, and of the Univerſal Medicine.

The cleareſt Account of this Matter, that I have ever met with, is in the Anſwer of a *French* Adept, to Doctor *Edmund Dickenſon*, Phyſician to King *Charles* II. and a profeſt Admirer of the Hermetic Philoſophy. The Doctor's Letter is very plain and clear. He wrote to this Friend of his, in order to be thoroughly informed as to thoſe Contrarieties, which he thought he had diſcerned in the Diſcourſes of ſome of the Hermetic Sages: His Friend gives him a very plauſible Anſwer to all his

(*u*) This Mormius went into Holland in the Year 1630, where he demanded an Audience of the States-General, in order to tender them certain Propoſitions from the Fraternity of the Roſicruſians, which they refuſed to hear; this did not, however, hinder Mormius from publiſhing a Treatiſe under the following Title, which is now become a ſcarce and valueable Book; Arcana totius naturæ ſecretiſſima, nec hactenus unquam detecta, Collegio Roſiano in lucem produntur, Operâ Petri Mormii, in 24. Lugduni Batavorum, 1630.

Objections, and, to enforce the Belief of what he lays down, he puts the Doctor in mind of his having made Projection, that is, his having transmuted base Metals into Gold, more than once, before the Doctor, in the King's Laboratory in *Whitehall*; as to the Universal Medicine, and its Capacity of extending the Life of Man for many Ages, he positively asserts, that it is in the Hands of the *illuminated Brethren*, and gives many Reasons why they should be so extremely careful in concealing it. He goes so far as to insinuate, that it was in his own Possession (*w*). I must own, I am astonished at such Sort of Assertions, and more so, at some Relations well attested that seem to favour the Truth of it.

There happened in the Year 1687, an odd Accident at *Venice*, that made very much Stir then, and which I think deserves to be secured from Oblivion. The great Freedom and Ease with which all Persons, who make a good Appearance, live in that City, is known sufficiently to all who are acquainted with it; they will not therefore be surprized, that a Stranger, who went by the Name of *Signor Gualdi*, and who made a considerable Figure there, was admitted into the best Company, though no body knew who, or what he was. He remained at *Venice* some Months; and three Things were remarked in his Conduct. The first was, that he had a small Collection of fine Pictures, which he readily shewed to any Body that desired it; the next, that he

(*w*) The Title of Dr. Dickenson's Book, referr'd to by our Author, is, De quinta essentia Philosophorum. It was printed at Oxford, in 1686, and a second Time in 1705. There is a third Edition of it printed in Germany, in 1721. The Author was one of those very great Men, whose Merits are better known abroad than at home; he is mentioned by the learned Olaus Borrichius, and many other foreign Writers, with much Respect, and just Testimonies of Esteem for his extensive Knowlege.

was perfectly versed in all Arts and Sciencies, and spoke on all Subjects with such Readiness and Sagacity, as astonished all who heard him; and it was in the third Place observed, that he never wrote or received any Letters, never desired any Credit, or made use of Bills of Exchange, but paid for every Thing in ready Money, and lived decently, though not in Splendor. This Gentleman met one Day at the Coffee-house with a *Venetian* Nobleman, who was an extraordinary good Judge of Pictures: He had heard of *Signor Gualdi*'s Collection, and in a very polite Manner desired to see them, to which the other very readily consented. After the *Venetian* had viewed *Signor Gualdi*'s Collection, and expressed his Satisfaction, by telling him that he had never seen a finer, considering the Number of Pieces of which it consisted, he cast his Eye by chance over the Chamber Door, where hung a Picture of this Stranger. The *Venetian* look'd upon it, and then upon him. This Picture was drawn for you, Sir, says he to *Signor Gualdi*, to which the other made no Answer, but by a low Bow, You look, continued the *Venetian*, like a Man of Fifty, and yet I know this Picture to be of the Hand of *Titian*, who has been dead one hundred and thirty Years, how is this possible? It is not easy, said *Signor Gualdi*, gravely, to know all Things that are possible; but there is certainly no Crime in my being like a Picture drawn by *Titian*. The *Venetian* easily perceived by his Manner of speaking, that he had given the Stranger Offence, and therefore took his leave. He could not forbear speaking of this in the Evening to some of his Friends, who resolved to satisfy themselves by looking upon the Picture the next Day. In order to have an Opportunity of doing so, they went to the Coffee-house about the Time that *Signor Gualdi* was wont to come thither, and not meeting with him; one of them who had often

conversed

conversed with him, went to his Lodgings to enquire after him, where he heard, that he set out an Hour before for *Vienna*. This Affair made a great Noise, and found a Place in all the News-papers of that Time (*x*).

This Story agrees very well with what is said by Doctor *Dickenson*'s Correspondent, who observes, that the Adepts are obliged to conceal themselves for the sake of Safety, and that having a Power, not only of prolonging their Lives, but also of renovating themselves, they take care to use it with the utmost Discretion, and instead of making a Display of this wonderful Prerogative, they manage it with the utmost Secrecy, which he lays down as the true Cause of the World's being in so much Doubt about the Matter. Hence it comes to pass, that though an Adept is possessed of greater Wealth than is contained in the Mines of *Peru*, yet he always lives in so moderate a Manner, as to avoid all Suspicion, and so as never to be discovered, unless by some unforeseen Accident, like that which happened to a famous *English* Artist, who disguised himself under the Name of *Eugenius Philalethes*, and whose true Name is said to be *Thomas Vaughan*, the clearest and most candid Writer of all the Hermetic Philosophers (*y*). He tells us of himself, that going to a Goldsmith, in order to sell twelve hundred Marks of fine Silver, the Man told him at first Sight, that it never came out of the Mines, but was the Product of Art, as not being of the Standard of any Nation whatever; which surprized *Philalethes* so much, that he withdrew immediately, and left the Goldsmith in Possession of his Treasure. This famous Man, who

(*x*) Memoires Historiques, 1687, Tom i. p. 365. (*y*) The most famous of his Pieces is intitled, Introitus appertus ad occlusum Regis Palatium. This was written originally in English, has been translated into almost all the European Languages, and is unquestionably the best and clearest Book upon the Subject that is extant in any Tongue.

certainly

certainly was an Adept, if ever there was one, led a wandering kind of Life, and fell often into great Dangers, merely from his possessing this great Secret. He was born, as we learn from his Writings, about the Year 1612, and what is the strangest Part of his History, he is believed, by those of his Fraternity, to be yet living; and a Person of great Credit at *Nurenberg*, affirms, that he conversed with him but a few Years ago. Nay, it is further asserted by all the Lovers of Hermetic Philosophy, that this very *Philalethes*, is the President of the *illuminated* in *Europe*, and that he constantly sits as such in all their annual Meetings. It is on the one hand true, that there is something wild and incredible in these Relations, and yet it is certain on the other, that several, who attest them, are Persons of irreproachable Characters; and even with Respect to this *Philalethes*, he was, according to the Report of the great *Boyle*, and others who knew him, a Man of remarkable Piety, and of unstained Morals. In the *English* Plantations, he became acquainted with one *Starkey*, a Chymist, before whom he made Projection, but finding that *Starkey* was a vicious and extravagant Man, he broke off his Acquaintance with him, without communicating any Part of his Secrets (*z*).

But it may be said, by such as look upon this whole Affair as an idle and ridiculous Thing, and who consider all these Relations, however attested, or supported, as mere Dreams, or Visions; I say it may be alledged by these angry Criticks, that it is a direct Proof of the Falshood of their Pretensions to long Life; that we have distinct

(*z*) This George Starkey was originally an Apothecary, had a Head turned to Chemistry, but managed his Affairs so ill, that he was obliged to transport himself to the Plantations, where he became acquainted with Philalethes, of which Acquaintance he boasts much in his Writings. In 1658 he published a Book of Chemistry at London, which was translated into French in 1706, and into High Dutch, in 1712.

Accounts

Accounts of the Time when their most celebrated Patriarchs, such as *Roger Bacon*, *Raymon Lully*, and *Basil Valentine* died, and were buried. If therefore, these Men could not preserve their own Lives, or even protract them beyond the ordinary Extent, what Probability is there, will the People say, that any of the Fraternity should prolong their Lives in the Manner they relate? In answer to this, the Adepts always insinuate, that if these great Men died, it was by their own Choice, and that many of their Fraternity still decline that Length of Life their Art would enable them to enjoy. This I must confess, is an unsatisfactory Answer, especially to such as make the Objection, but then say the Adepts, it is the only Answer that becomes us to give; we do not aim at the Conviction of these Sort of People, we are not desirous of making a Noise in the World, we do not even regard the Possession of Riches and long Life as Blessings in themselves further than that they enable us to do good; and the sole Reason of our ever mentioning such Secrets being in our Possession, is in Order to lead to our Society such worthy Persons as deserved to be associated. Now, however weak, however sophistical; this reasoning may appear to the Generality of Mankind, yet, upon the Principles of the Hermetic Philosophy, it must be allowed to be extremely plausible, and in all such Cases, we must admit Men to argue from their own Principles, and not from those we lay down.

As I do not profess myself either an Adept, or so much as a Student in this Sort of Philosophy, I shall take the Liberty, as the Matter of Fact nearly concerns the Subject of which I am treating, to shape out another Answer to this Objection, and it is this, that perhaps we are not always so secure as to the Deaths of these Virtuosi, as we imagine. The Continuance of their

Lives

Lives is a Thing, that though they boaſt of in one Senſe, yet in another they ſtudiouſly affect to conceal. Of this I ſhall give an extraordinary Inſtance, which will be ſo much the more entertaining to the Reader, as, for any any thing I know, it has not yet been taken notice of by any Writer upon this Subject, not even by the profeſſed Hiſtorian of this Fraternity, notwithſtanding he has made larger Collections concerning them and their Philoſophy, than any Man that ever ſet Pen to Paper. This Inſtance will be alſo found the more extraordinary, ſince I take it from one who never pretended to be an Adept, and who, therefore, ought to be conſidered as an unprejudiced Witneſs. But before I enter upon this Story, I muſt deſire my Readers to obſerve, that I lay down Facts barely as I find them, and do not pretend to intereſt myſelf in the leaſt, as to the Credit they may meet with.

Amongſt the Hermetic Philoſophers, who were allowed to have attained the higheſt Secrets of Science, *Nicholas Flamel* of *Paris* has been always reckoned one of the moſt conſiderable, and his Right to this Reputation the leaſt to be conteſted. The Hiſtory of this *Flamel*, who flouriſhed in the XIV. Century is very curious: He was a Perſon of a good Family, though much reduced in point of Fortune; had quick Parts, a lively Wit, and with the Advantage of no more than ordinary Education, was ſent to *Paris* to get a Living as he could. *Flamel* wrote an extraordinary good Hand, had ſome Notions of Poetry, and painted very prettily; yet all theſe Accompliſhments raiſed him no higher than a Hackney Clerk, in which Condition he worked very hard, and had much ado to pick up a Subſiſtance. In 1357, Chance threw in his Way a Book of Hermetic Philoſophy, written by one *Abraham* a *Jew*, or rather engraven on Leaves made of the Bark of Trees, and illuſtrated

with very curious Pictures, in which the whole Secret was laid down in the clearest Manner possible, to such as were acquainted with Hermetic Philosophy. This Treasure cost *Flamel* no more than two Florins, for the Person who sold him the Book knew nothing of what it contained, and *Flamel* himself, though he made it his whole Study for twenty Years, and tho' he took the Precaution of copying the Pictures, and hanging them up in his House, and asking the learned their Opinion about them, was able to make very little of them (*a*).

Tired at length with so vain and so laborious a Study, he, in 1378, took a Resolution to travel into *Spain*, in hopes of meeting there with some learned *Jew*, who might give him the Key to the Grand Secret; that this Journey might not appear to be undertaken on quite so chimerical a Motive, he made a Vow to go in Pilgrimage to St. *James's* of *Compostella*, a Practice frequent in those Times. After much Search to little Purpose, he met at last with a *Jew* Physician at *Leon*, who had been lately converted to the Christian Religion, and who was well versed in this Kind of Science; this Man, at the Persuasion of *Flamel*, consented to go with him to *Paris*; but when they were got as far as *Orleans*, the Physician, who was far in Years, and little accustomed to the Fatigue of Travel, fell sick of a Fever, which carried him off in a few Days (*b*).

Flamel

(*a*) The best Part of this Account of Nicholas Flamel is taken from his Article in a very curious Book, which, as it deserves to be more known than it is, encourages me to set down the Title thereof at large, which runs thus. Tresor des Recherches & Antiquitiez Gauloises, reduites en ordre alphabetique, & enriches de beaucoup d'Origines, Epitaphes, & autre choses rares & curieuses, comme aussi de beaucoup de Mots de la langue Thyoise, ou Theuthfranque. Paris, 1655. in 4to. (*b*) As the History of Flamel was collected long after his Death, it is very possible that there might be some Mistakes committed in relation to the Circumstances attending his Adventures; but there is one Thing which, I think

Flamel, having rendered the last kind Offices to his dying Friend, returned very disconsolate to *Paris*. where he studied three years more, according to the Instructions he had received from the Physician, with such Success, that on the 17th of *January*, 1382, he made Projection on a large Quantity of Mercury, which he changed into fine Silver, and, on the 25th of *April* following, he transmuted a vast Quantity of Mercury into Gold. He afterwards repeated frequently the Experiment, and acquired thereby immense Wealth. He and his Wife *Perrenella*, in the Midst of all these Riches, lived still in their old sober Way, and eat and drank, as usual, out of earthen Vessels. They maintained however a vast Number of Poor, founded fourteen Hospitals, built three Chapels, and repaired and endowed seven Churches. In short, the Acts of Charity they did were so astonishing, that *Charles* the VII. who was then upon the Throne, resolved to enquire how they came by their Wealth, and sent for that Purpose M. *de Cramoisi*, Master of Requests, and a Magistrate of the highest Reputation for Probity and Honour, to examine into their Circumstances; to whom *Flamel* gave so satisfactory an Answer, that no further Enquiry was made about them; but the honest old People were left in Possession of the only Privilege they desired, which was no greater, than that of doing all the good that lay in their Power (*c*).

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think, proves the Reality of the Story beyond Dispute, which is, that this very Book of Abraham the Jew, with the Annotations of Flamel, who wrote from the Instructions he received from this Physician, was actually in the Hands of Cardinal Richelieu, as Borel was told by the Count de Cabrines, who saw and examined it.

(*c*) This too is a Fact out of Dispute, and as a Proof that Flamel drew his Riches from his Acquaintance with the Hermetic Philosophy, the Hieroglyphic Pictures upon his Tomb are usually, and I think very justly cited, as well as the Treatises he wrote upon this Subject.

The Circumstances of this Story, the immense Wealth of *Flamel*, and his Wife, their many Foundations, their vast Endowments, and the prodigious Estate they left behind them, are all Facts so well attested, that no Dispute can be raised about them; or if they were, the last Will of *Nicholas Flamel*, which, with forty authentic Acts of as many charitable Foundations, that are laid up in the Archives of the Parish Church of St. *James*, in the Butchery at *Paris*, are Proofs capable of convincing the greatest Infidel. This *Flamel* wrote several Treatises on the Art of Chymistry; but they are extremely obscure, because they are all delivered in an allegorical Way, and consequently one may hit upon various Interpretations, without coming at the true one; which, it is said, he gave to a Nephew of his, and that the Secret remained long in the Family, nay it is owing to Indiscretion, if it does not so still (*d*). I must not, however, conceal an Attempt that has been made to overturn the whole of this History, not by denying the Facts, for that would have been ridiculous, since there are hundreds of Poor that yet subsist on *Flamel*'s and his Wife's Foundations, and are consequently so many living Witnesses of the Veracity of that Part of the Relation.

But the Thing attempted is to give another Account of *Flamel*'s acquiring his Wealth, and in order to this they tell you, that he was a Notary Publick, at the Time the *Jews* were expelled *France*, that they deposit-

particularly the following Work of his, La grand Ecclairciffement de la Pierre philosophale, pour la Transmutation de tous Metaux, par Nicholas Flamel, in 8vo Paris 1628.

(*d*) Flamel left his Secret to the Family of Du Perrier, the last of which was a Physician of that Name, amongst whose Papers it was found, I mean only Part of the Powder, by one Du Bois; who having acted very imprudently, in making Projection before several Persons, and pretending to much greater Knowlege than he really had, brought upon himself an unfortunate End, being hanged by order of Cardinal Richelieu.

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ed with him in Truſt, a great Part of their Wealth, and that he kept it for his own Uſe (*e*). Such as treat all that is ſaid of the Philoſopher's Stone and of Hermetic Philoſophy, as a Fable, have run away with this Explication as if it had been a clear and ſatisfactory Account of the Matter, without conſidering that it is in Truth attended with greater Difficulties, than the Tale of the Tranſmutation. For what Probability is there, that Perſons of ſo much Worth and Piety, as *Flamel* and his Wife are allowed to have been, ſhould be guilty of ſuch a flagrant Act of Injuſtice, as to betray the Truſt repoſed in them, and this purely to do Acts of Charity? If indeed they had lived in luxurious Plenty, and had rioted in all the Pleaſures which their immenſe Wealth might have enabled them to have indulged, the Story might have deſerved ſome Credit; but to imagine that two ſober People, leading a Life of the utmoſt Frugality, and expending all their Revenues for pious and charitable Purpoſes, ſhould contrive to get the Money ſo ſpent, by baſe and fraudulent Means, is utterly incredible. Beſides, if this had been the Caſe, it is impoſſible to account for two Circumſtances; the firſt is, that the King of *France* ſhould be ſatisfied with the Account that *Flamel* thought fit to give to *Cramoiſi*; the other, that this Story ſhould never break out during the Life of *Flamel*, nor within an Age after his Death: But as I know there are People, who, to avoid being ſuſpected of Credulity, will ſwallow any Thing oppoſite to what they think it would be a

(*e*) This Story, as far as I am able to learn, was firſt uſhered into the World by Gabriel Naudé, a warm and angry Writer, and one far from being exact; from him it is copied by George Hornius, in his Preface to the Works of Geber, and by many other Writers. But as to the Notoriety of the Fact, with reſpect to the Baniſhment of the Jews, as all the French Hiſtorians agree in it, and in the Dates relating to it, one may ſafely conlude, that it is fully anſwered.

Shame

Shame to believe, I shall destroy this critical History of *Flamel's* Riches by an Argument, even that these People dare not discredit. In short, the *Jews* have been twice expelled *France*, first in 1180, long before *Flamel* was born, and again in 1406, several Years after all his Endowments were made, and but seven Years before the Death of him and his Wife *Perrenella* (*f*).

But methinks I hear some captious Reader cry out, what did *Flamel* and *Perrenella* die? To what end then all this tedious Story? What is there in *Flamel's* Life that corresponds with that of *Hermippus*? Or what has Alchymy to do with the Breath of Virgins, or the Prolongation of human Life? Peace a little; I promised you some Account of *Flamel*, that has not been hitherto regarded, that has escaped the Notice of all who have written the History of Hermetic Philosophers, from the noble *Olaus Borrichius*, down to the Abbe de *Frensoy*, and this I am going to give you. But, permit me to observe, first, that my Account is taken from the Travels of the Sieur *Paul Lucas*, who by order of *Lewis* XIV. passed through *Greece*, *Asia Minor*, *Macedonia*, and *Africa*, in search of Antiquities, who dedicated this Book of his to that Prince, and who must be therefore presumed to relate what was true, or what he took to be true; for no Body, who knew the Character of *Lewis* XIV. can imagine, that he would suffer a Fellow to usher in his Falshoods into the World, under the Sanction of his Name; much less that after being guilty of such a Piece of Insolence, he should encourage, protect, and employ such a Man, as in Fact he did to the very end of his Reign; and this in Consequence of the Reputation he acquired from the

(*f*) If the Reader has a-mind to be better acquainted with the Adventures of this Adept, he may consult the History of Hermetic Philosophy, published lately by the Abbe Lenglet du Fresnoy.

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Publication of the Voyages, the Authority of which I am going to use (*g*).

It may not be amiss to put my Reader in mind, that I have strictly kept my word. The Sieur *Lucas* was no Hermetic Philosopher, no Chymist, no deep Student in the Sciences, and, if we guess from his Writings, no Man of Art, or Address, but a bold, rough, free-spoken Traveller, who had seen much, and was willing to tell the World all he had seen. If from hence any should be led into an Opinion that he was a credulous Man, and might be easily imposed on, I have nothing to say to that; I do not intend to turn Advocate for the Solidity of a Traveller's Understanding, any more than for the Truth of Hermetic Philosophy. I only lay down Things as they are, or at least as they appear to be, and leave all the rest to the Readers Decision. All I insist upon as to the Sieur *Lucas*'s Relation, is this, that he could not be deceived as to the Matter of Fact; he could not dream the Story he has told us; he could not see it in a Vision; and as to the rest, I do not concern myself about it; he might possibly be cheated by the *Mohammedan* Monks; for I can readily conceive, that Monks of all Religions, are the same; and yet, if as great Absurdities, and much greater Difficulties attend the Story in this Light, than in any other, I presume it may justify a Hint, that it is not impossible it might be, otherwise than such severe Critics may incline to believe. But it is now time to come to the Story, and therefore I shall put an end to my Reflections.

He informs us, that being at *Broussa*, in *Natolia*, and going to take the Air towards a little Village called *Bour-*

(*g*) See the Preface to the Book from which this Story is taken, which is entituled Voyage de Sieur Paul Lucas, fait par ordre du Roi, dans la Grece, &c. Amsterdam, 1714, in 12mo. two Vols.

nous

nous *Bachy*, at a ſmall Diſtance from thence, in Company with a Perſon of Diſtinction, he met with the following Adventure, which I ſhall relate to you exactly in his own Words. We went together to a little Moſque, ſays he, where one of their moſt eminent Dervifes was interred. It is always a Dervife that has the Cuſtody of ſuch Places, which are, generally ſpeaking, pleaſantly ſituated, adorned with Gardens and Fountains, and, on that Account, ſet a-part for public Walks, and Places for Recreation. We were quickly introduced into a little Cloiſter, where we found four Dervifes, who received us with all imaginable Civility, and deſired us to partake of what they were eating; we were told, what we ſoon found to be very true, that they were all Perſons of the greateſt Worth and Learning. One of them, who ſaid he was of the Country of the *Usbecks*, (a Tribe of *Tartars*) appeared to me more learned than the reſt, and I believe verily he ſpoke all the Languages in the World. As he did not know me to be a *Frenchman*, after we had converſed ſomeTime in the *Turkiſh* Languages, he asked me, if I could ſpeak *Latin*, *Spaniſh*, or *Italian*. I told him, that, if he pleaſed, he might talk to me in *Italian*; but as he ſoon diſcovered by my Accent, that it was not my Mother Tongue, he asked me frankly, what Country I came from. As ſoon as he knew that I was a Native of *France*, he ſpoke to me in as good *French*, as if he had been brought up at *Paris*. How long Sir, ſaid I, did you ſtay in *France*? He anſwered me, that he had never been there, but that he had a great Inclination to undertake the Journey.

I did all that lay in my Power to ſtrenghten that Reſolution, and perſuade him to it: In order to which, I told him, that there was no Kingdom in the World more poliſhed; that Strangers eſpecially were extremely well

receiv-

received there, and that, without Question, he would receive the greatest Satisfaction from this Journey. No, no, returned he, I am not in such a Hurry to make it, I should be a Fool to flatter myself with any such Hopes; I am one of the Sages, and I know that is enough to hinder me from enjoying Quiet there, so that I am not like to think any more of the Matter. I took a great deal of Pains to convince him, that he was deceived, that some bad People had given him ill Impressions of my Country; that *France*, on the contrary, was the very Nursery of the Learned, and that the King, whose Subject I had the Honour to be, was the greatest Patron of the Sciences. I went further still, I told him, that tho' I had not the Honour to be of any learned Profession myself, yet his Majesty was pleased to defray the Expences of the Travels in which he saw me engaged, and this with no other View than to procure Notices of those Things, the Knowledge of which remained yet necessary for perfecting the Sciences; such as of Herbs that might be useful in Physic; ancient Monuments that might contribute to the Illustration of remarkable Events, and consequently serve to render History more complete; the View of the Countries themselves in order to the rectifying geographical Charts; in fine, I run through all the Proofs I could think of, in order to convince him of the Inclination that prevailed in *France*, in favour of the Sciences, and of Learning; all which he attributed to the Climate, and seemed to approve of what I said, out of pure Civility. At last, however, he seem'd to be ravished with the fine Things I told him, and went so far as to assure me, that some Time or other he would certainly go thither. Our Conversation being ended, the Dervises carried us to their House, which was at the Bottom of the Mountain, very near *Bournous Bachy*, where, having drank Coffee, I took my leave of them, but with

a Promise, however, that I would come and see them again.

On the 10th, the Dervise, whom I took for an *Usbec*, came to pay me a Visit. I received him in the best Manner possible; and as he appeared to me a very learned, as well as curious Man, I shewed him all the Manuscripts I had bought, and he assured me they were very valuable, and written by great Authors: I must say, in favour of this Dervise, that he was a Person every way extraordinary, even to his outward Appearance. He shewed me Abundance of curious Things in Physic, and promised me more; but, at the same Time, he could not help saying, that it was necessary that I should make some extraordinary Preparations on my Side, in order to put myself into a Condition of profiting by the Lights he was able to give me. To judge according to his Appearance, he should have been a Man about thirty; but by his Discourse, he seemed to have lived at least a Century; and of this I was the more persuaded from the Accounts he gave me of some long Voyages he had made.

He told me, that he was one of seven Friends, who all wander'd up and down the World with the same View of perfecting themselves in their Studies, and that, at parting, they always appointed another Meeting at the End of twenty Years, in a certain City which was mentioned, and that the first who came waited for the rest. I perceived, without his telling me, that *Broussa* was the City appointed for their present Meeting. There were four of them there already, and they appeared to converse with each other, with a Freedom that spoke rather an old Acquaintance, than accidental Meeting. In a long Conversation with a Man of great Parts, it is natural to run over Abundance of curious Topics. Religion and natural Philosophy took up our Thoughts by

Turns,

Turns, and at last we fell upon Chemistry, Alchymy, and the Cabala; I told him, that all these, and especially the Notion of the Philosophers Stone, were now regarded by most Men of Sense, as mere Fictions and Chimeras. That, returned he, ought not to surprize you, for in the first Place, we ought to suffer nothing to astonish us in this Life; the true Sage hears all Things, without being scandalized at them; but though he may have so much Complaisance, as not to shock an ignorant Person when he talks of these Things, yet is he obliged, do you think, to sink his Understanding to a Level with vulgar Minds, because they are not able to raise their Thoughts to an Equality with his? When I speak of a Sage, said he, I mean that Kind of Man to whom alone the Title of Philosopher properly belongs. He has no Sort of Tie to the World, he sees all Things die and revive without Concern; he has more Riches in his Power than the greatest of Kings, but he tramples them under his Feet, and this generous Contempt sets him, even in the midst of Indigence, above the Power of Events.

Here I stop'd him. With all these fine Maxims, said I, the Sage dies as well as other People. What imports it therefore to me, to have been either a Fool, or a Philosopher, if Wisdom hath no Perogative over Folly, and one is no more a Shield against Death, than the other? Alas! said he, I perceive you are absolutely unacquainted with sublime Science, and have never known true Philosophy. Learn from me, my Friend, such a one as I have described dies indeed, for Death is a Debt which Nature exacts, and from which therefore no Man can be exempt; but then he dies not before the Time fix'd by his great Creator. But then you must observe, that this Period approaches near a thousand Years, and to the Extent of that Time a Sage may live. He arrives at this, through the Knowlege he has of the true Medi-

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cine. By this Means he is able to ward off whatever may impeach, or hinder, the Animal Functions, or destroy the Temperature of his Nature; by this he is enabled to acquire the Knowledge of whatever God has left within the Cognizance of Man: The first Man knew them by his Reason; but it was this same Reason that blotted them again from his Mind; for having attained to this Kind of natural Knowledge, he began to mingle therewith his own Notions and Ideas. By this Confusion, which was the Effects of a foolish Curiosity, he rendered imperfect even the Work of his Creator; and this Error it is that the Sage labours to redress. The rest of Animals act only by their Instinct, by which they preserve themselves, as at their first Institution, and live as long now, as when the World first began. Man is yet a great deal more perfect; but has he still preserved that Prerogative we mentioned, or has he not lost long-ago the glorious Privilege of living a thousand Years, which,with so much Care, he should have studied to preserve? This then it is,that the true Sages have retrieved; and, that you may no more be led into Mistakes, let me assure you, that this is the Philosophers Stone, which is not a chimerical Science, as some half-read People fancy, but a Thing solid and sound. On the other hand, it is certainly known but to a few, and indeed it is impossible it should be known to most Part of Mankind, whom Avarice or Debauch destroy, or, whom an impetuous Desire of Life kills.

Surprized at all I heard; And would you then persuade me, said I, that all who have possessed the Philosophers Stone, have likewise lived a thousand Years? Without doubt, returned he gravely, for whenever God has been pleased to favour any Mortal with that Blessing,it depends entirely on himself to reach the Age of a thousand Years; as in his State of Innocence the first Man might

have

have done. I told him, that there had been in our Country ſome of thoſe happy Mortals that were ſaid to have poſſeſſed this Life-giving Stone, and yet had never extended their Days to ſuch a Length, as to go with Decrepitneſs, that muſt attend ſuch an exceſſive Age, into another State: But, continued he, don't you know that the Appellation of a Philoſopher is much proſtituted; let me tell you once again, there is none properly ſuch, but thoſe who live to the Age I have mentioned. At laſt I took the Liberty to mention the illuſtrious *Flamel*, who, I ſaid, had poſſeſſed the Philoſophers Stone, but was dead to all Intents and Purpoſes for all that. At the Mention of his Name he ſmiled at my Simplicity. As I had by this Time begun to yield ſome Degree of Credit to his Diſcourſe, I was ſurprized he ſhould make a Doubt of what I advanced upon this Head. The Derviſe obſerved this, and could not help ſaying, with an Air of Mirth, and do you really think the Thing ſo? Do you actually believe *Flamel* is dead? No, no, my Friend, continued he, don't deceive yourſelf, *Flamel* is living ſtill, neither he nor his Wife are yet at all acquainted with the dead; it is not above three Years ago, ſince I left both the one and the other in the *Indies*, and he is, ſaid he, one of my beſt Friends: Upon which he was going to tell me how their Acquaintance grew, but ſtopping himſelf ſhort of a ſudden, that, ſaid he, is little to the Purpoſe, I will rather give you his true Hiſtory, with reſpect to which, in your Country, I dare ſay, you are not very well acquainted.

We Sages, continued he, though rare in the World, yet are we equally of all Sects and Profeſſions; neither is there any great Inequality amongſt us on that Account. A little before the Time of *Flamel*, there was a *Jew* of our Fraternity; but as through his whole Life he had a moſt ardent Affection for his Family, he could

not help desiring to see them, after he once came to the Knowledge of their being settled in *France*. We foresaw the Danger of the Thing, and did all that in us lay to divert him from this Journey, in which we often succeeded. At last, however, the Passion of seeing his Family grew so strong upon him, that go he would; but, at the Time of his Departure, he made a solemn Promise to return to us as soon as it was possible. In a Word, he arrived at *Paris*, which was, as it is now, the Capital of the Kingdom, and found there, his Father's Descendents were in the highest Esteem among the *Jews*. Amongst others there was a *Rabbi* who had a Genius for the true Philosophy, and who had been long in Search of the great Secret. Our Friend did not hesitate at making himself known to his Relation; on the contrary, he entered into a strict Friendship with him, and gave him Abundance of Lights. But, as the first Matter is a long Time preparing, he contented himself with putting into Writing, the whole Series of the Process, and to convince his Nephew that he had not amused him with Falshoods, he made Projection in his Presence on thirty Ocques (*an Ocques is three Pounds*) of base Metal, and turned it into pure Gold. The *Rabbi*, full of Admiration, did all he could to persuade our Brother to remain with him, but in vain; because he, on the other hand, was resolved not to break his Word with us. The *Jew*, when he found this, changed his Affection to mortal Hatred, and his Avarice stifling all Principles of Nature and Religion, he resolved to extinguish one of the Lights of the Universe. Dissembling, however, his black Designs, he besought the Sage, in the tenderest Manner, to remain with him only for a few Days. During this Space, he plotted and executed his execrable Purpose, murdered our Brother, and made himself Master of his Medicine. Such horrible Actions

never

never remain long unpunished. Some other black Things he had done came to light, for which the *Jew* was thrown into Prison, convicted, and burnt alive.

The *Jew* fell soon after under a Persecution at *Paris*, as without doubt you have heard. *Flamel* more reasonable than the rest of his Countrymen, entered into a strict Friendship with some of them; and as his great Honesty, and unblemished Probity were well known, a *Jew* Merchant entrusted him with all his Books and Papers, among which were those of the *Jew* which had been burnt, and the Book that our Brother had left with him. The Merchant taken up no doubt with his own Affairs, and with the Care of his Trade, had never considered this valuable Piece with any Attention; but *Flamel*, whose Curiosity led him to examine it more closely, perceiving several Pictures of Furnaces and Alembicks, and other Vessels, he began immediately to apprehend, that in this Book was contained the grand Secret. He got the first Leaf of the Book, which was in *Hebrew*, translated, and, with the little he met with therein, was confirmed in his Opinion; but knowing that the Affair required Prudence and Circumspection, he took, in order to avoid all Discovery, the following Steps: he went into *Spain*, and as *Jews* were every where settled throughout that Country, in every Place that he came to, he applied himself to the most learned, engaging each of them to translate a Page of his Book: Having thus obtained an entire Version, he set out again for *Paris*. He brought back with him a faithful Friend of his, to labour with him in the Work, and with whom he intended to share the Secret; but a raging Fever carried him off, and deprived *Flamel* of his Associate (*b*).

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(*b*) The Reader will easily perceive, that there are some Variations in this History from that which we have before given of Flamel; but this only shews, that we have not done any Thing

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When, therefore, he came home, he and his Wife entered together upon the Work, and, arriving in process of Time at the Secret, acquired immense Riches, which they employed in building public Edifices, and doing good to a Multitude of People.

Fame is frequently a very dangerous Evil; but a true Sage knows how to extricate himself from all kinds of Peril. *Flamel* saw plainly, that the prevailing Notion of his having the Philosopher's Stone might be fatal both to his Liberty and Life, he therefore bent all his Thoughts to the contriving some Method for extricating himself out of this Danger, and having at last struck out one, he took care to execute it immediately, and found Means to secure their Flight, by spreading a Report of his Wife's Death, and his own. By his Advice, she feigned herself sick of a Distemper, which had its usual Course, so that, by the Time she was said to die, she had reached the Frontiers of *Swisserland*, where he had directed her to wait for him. They buried in her stead a Wooden Image dress'd up, and that nothing might be wanting to the Ceremonial, it was interred in one of the Churches that they had founded. Some time after, he had recourse to the like Stratagem for his own Security, and having buried another Wooden Statue, he, by that Time the Funeral was over, joined his Wife. You will easily perceive that there was no great Difficulty in all

to countenance this Tale, or to give it that Air of Probability which in Truth it wants; and after all, the Difference between these Accounts is very far from being so great, as to destroy the Credit of either of them. For it is very probable, that Lucas's Memory might betray him, and that he might refresh it, on his Return into France from the common Story of Flamel, with which his agrees. The principal Reason of my citing it was, his Conclusion, which I particularly recommend to the Reader's Confideration; since, if Flamel's Story be known in those Parts of the World, with such a Degree of Exactness, it is little less wonderful than the rest of the Story in all Circumstances.

this

this since, in every Country, if a Man has Money, Physicians and Priests are always at his Service, ready to say or do whatever he directs them. To give the Thing still the better Grace, and to prevent the least Suspicion of the Cheat, *Flamel* made his last Will and Testament in Form, wherein he particularly desired that his Corps might be interr'd near that of his dear Wife, and that a Pyramid should be erected to their Memories. Since that Time, both of them have led a Philosophic Life, sometimes in one Country, sometimes in another. This, depend upon it, is the true History of *Flamel* and his Wife, and not that which you have heard at *Paris*, where there are very few who have ever had the least Glympse of true Wisdom.

This Story appeared to me what I think it must appear to every one, equally singular and strange, and the more so, as it was told me by *Mohammedan*, who, I have all the Reason in the World to believe, never set one Foot in *France*. As to the rest, I report this Matter purely as an Historian, and I have even passed by Abundance of Circumstances more remarkable than any I have related; the Truth of which however he affirmed. I shall content myself therefore with saying, that we are apt to entertain too mean Notions of the Learning of the *Mohammedans*, for certainly this Man was a Person in all Respects of extensive Knowledge, and a superior Genius (*i*).

We have now done with the History of *Flamel*, and if the Reader has a-mind to know how I bring it to have any Connection with my Subject, I shall inform him, in very few Words. According to my Sentiments, which are in Part founded upon the Writings of *Flamel* himself, the first Matter of the universal Medicine, the Philosophers Stone, or the Grand Secret of the Hermetic Philosophers, is taken from the Air; and from

(*i*) Voyage du Lucas, Tom. 1. p. 79---90.

ſome of their Writings I have gathered, that they were not altogether unacquainted with the Secret of *Hermippus*; ſo that if this Inſcription had fallen into their Hands, I make no queſtion but they would have pronounced him an Adept, and have ſupported this Deciſion of theirs, by giving us an Account, in their Manner, of his Method of performing it (*k*).

This Account, ſo far as I have been able to collect it, the Reader ſhall receive in the cleareſt Terms, for I pretend not to adopt their Manner of Writing, or to hide in ambiguous Allegories ſo uſeful a Truth.

In ſome Books, written by theſe Sort of Philoſophers, I have met with various Experiments for applying the the ſalubrious Particles of the human Breath to medicinal Purpoſes; and, amongſt theſe, the following ſeems to be that which beſt deſerves Notice, as it ſhews a wonderful Ingenuity, and is, I believe, the ſingle Attempt that was ever made to extract the Tinctures of living Animals, in order to make them enter, like other Tinctures, into all the Uſes of Phyſic. " Let there be, " ſays my Author, a ſmall cloſe Room prepared, and " let there be ſet up in it five little Beds, each for a " ſingle Perſon. In theſe Beds let there lie five Vir- " gins under the Age of thirteeen, and of wholeſome " Conſtitutions. Then in the Spring of the Year, a- " bout the Beginning of the Month of *May*, let there " be a Hole pierced through the Wall of the Chamber, " through which let there be inſerted the Neck of a " Matraſs, the Body of the Glaſs being expoſed to the

(*k*) This Diſcovery will be pretty evident to any Reader who conſults the fourth, ninth, and twelfth Pages of a Treatiſe at the End of Mangetus's Bibliotheca Chemica, which Piece is entituled Mutus Liber, in quo tamen tota Philoſophia Hermetica figuris hieroglyphicis depingitur, ter optimo maximo Deo miſericordi conſecratus, ſoliſque filiis artis dedicatus authore, cujus nomen eſt Altus.

" cold

" cold Air without. It is eaſy to apprehend, that when " the Room it filled with the Breath and Matter perſpi- " red by theſe Virgins, the Vapours will continually " paſs through the Neck of the Matraſs into the Body " of the Veſſel, where, through the Coldneſs of the cir- " cumambient Air, they would be condenſed into a " clear Water, which is a Tincture of admirable Effi- " cacy, and may be juſtly ſtiled an *Elixir Vitæ*, ſince a " few Drops of it, given in the Beginning of any acute " Diſtemper, reſolves and diſperſes the morbific Matter, " ſo as to enable the animal Force to throw it off by " inſenſible Perſpiration (*l*)."

I could mention another Preparation from the vital Part of the Air itſelf, which is a great Secret amongſt theſe Philoſophers, and is perhaps the *White Dove*, often mentioned in the Writings of *Philalethes*, of which thus much is certain, that when the Air is once ſpoiled of this Principle, it is no longer fit for animal Reſpiration, and it was by a Contrivance of this Kind, that the famous *Cornelius Drebell* made that Liquor, which ſupplied the Place of Air in the Machine he contrived for carrying on a Kind of ſubmarine Navigation. This Medicine, which is, as I have ſaid, extracted from the Air, is whiter than Snow, colder than Ice, and ſo volatile, that if the Quantity of a Nutmeg be expoſed to the Air, it is aſcrib'd thereby in the Space of a few Seconds. This Secret, which is uſed for the ſame Purpoſes as the former, is ſtiled *Aura Puellarum* (*m*). We may gather from

(*l*) Secreti di diverſi excellentiſſimi Huomini, in 8vo. Mila 558. See alſo Lana. de mot. tranſpirat. lib. ii. cap. 3. artifi P. 73, 74.

(*m*) Whoever conſults the Liber Mutus, will plainly perceive, that the firſt Matter is taken from the Air; but by a Method very different from that which I here ſuggeſt, tho' poſſibly they may both contribute to the ſame End, ſince it is eaſy to conceive, that the

from all this, that if the Hermetic Philoſophers have in reality any ſuch Secret as they boaſt of, for the Preſervation of human Life, it is built upon the ſame Principles with thoſe which I have already laid down, and conſequently no true Adept can, conſiſtently with his own Notion of Things, oppoſe my Doctrine, eſpecially when he conſiders with what Reſtrictions it is offered, ſince I do not propoſe, as the Sages do, the prolonging Man's Life to the Term of a thouſand Years, neither do I promiſe the Renovation of Life, as ſome meaner Artiſts have done; all I contend for, is the Poſſibility of making ſuch Uſe of youthful Spitits, as, for a Time, to keep off the Inconveniencies of Age, which, though far inferior to what others aſſert they are able to perform, would ſtill be of the utmoſt Benefit to Mankind, if with Facility it could be carried into Practice.

I know very well it may, and I doubt not but it will be objected, if *Hermippus* was ſo wiſe a Man, why, inſtead of drawing old Age to ſuch a Length, did he not preſerve the Vigour of his Youth? This ſurely would have been by far a nobler Diſcovery, and to which the young Ladies would with the greateſt Readineſs have contributed. But I muſt put ſuch People as theſe in mind, that as, in this Treatiſe, I have inſerted nothing which may not be ſome way or other ſerviceable, either to the Inſtruction or Entertainment of Mankind, ſo I ſhall not think myſelf at all obliged to take Notice of any ludicrous Reflections. The Preſervation of Life, the defending the human Body from Decay, and of rendering it a fit Tenement for the Soul to inhabit, in that Seaſon in which ſhe is moſt capable of exerting her nobleſt Faculties, are grave and ſerious Subjects; with which no trivial Matters

the firſt Matter of the Philoſophers may reſide in ſeveral Places; nay, ſome of them have affirmed, that it is to be found every where; the famous Jacob Boehmen aſſerted, that it was to be met with in the Dirt of the Streets.

ought

ought to mingle. Besides, to speak my Opinion freely, though I think the Method of *Hermippus* extremely proper for repairing the Wastes of Nature, and preventing the Incommodities which usually attend on Years; yet I am far from believing, that this Method would contribute at all to the Extention of Youth, but rather the contrary; and for this, I think, I am able to offer some very probable Reasons.

In the first Place it will be necessary to observe, that I do not here mean by Youth a State of Infancy or Childhood, but rather that robust State between twenty-five and forty; for the Conversation of very young People with each other, I conceive to be as wholesome for their Bodies, as it is pleasant and agreeable to their Minds. But when the human Body is arrived at its full Strength, and is in that State of Health in which Temperance and Equanimity will maintain it, a Surcharge of animal Spirits may not only prove useless, but dangerous. It is an old, and a very true Observation, that the most florid State of Health is that in which a Man is in the greatest Peril, in case he receives any Infection; and the Reason is obvious, *viz.* because the animal Spirits act then with the utmost Vigour, and consequently must do the more Mischief, if by any means they are tainted. From the same Method of Reasoning we may conclude, that such a Manner of Living, as that which we have supposed *Hermippus* led, might be attended with Inconveniencies to a Man of a robust Constitution, and, perhaps, incline him to Frenzies, or at least to Fevers. A pure Air, light Diet, moderate Exercise, and a perfect Dominion over his Passions, with a few slight Remedies taken on proper Occasions, and according as Nature directs, may maintain a Man in the full Possession of Health and Spirits to sixty, and then it is Time enough for him to think of avoiding the Inconveniencies

niencies which usually attend old Age. I might also observe, that the Conversation of many young Women might, in the Summer of Life, draw along with it other Inconveniencies; but these are Subjects on which I do not chuse to insist, because it is not easy to treat them with that Delicacy which a philosophic Discourse like this requires; and because the slightest Hint is sufficient to suggest more to a Man of good Sense than is at all necessary to be delivered upon this Subject. I take it therefore for granted, that I have assigned the proper Bounds to my Remedy, and that I may safely define it the Cordial of advanced Years, which can never be safely administered, till, from a just Application of Reason, there has been produced an absolute Retreat of Appetite(*n*).

But if any should be mad enough to pursue this Objection further, and cry out, of what Significancy then is your Remedy? Why, in such a Situation, would you extend Life at all, or of what Use is Years when deprived of Enjoyments? If, I say, there are any so wild as to talk in this Manner, my Answer is, that they mistake my Meaning. I am clearly of Opinion, that the Pleasures of the Mind are far superior to all sensual Delights, and that the cultivating youthful Understandings, which is the Business in which I have supposed my old Man employed, is a pleasant and noble Undertaking, every way worthy of the Souls supremest Faculties, and carrying along with it its own Reward, *viz.* a second Youth, more pleasing, more delightful, than the first. For as, on the one hand, I cannot allow that such a Person should gratify, or so much as feel his Passions; so, on the other, I would not have him plunged into deep and preplexing Studies, but rather amused and diverted by Pursuits of another Nature. At particular Seasons, indeed,

(*n*) Cicero de Senectute.

he

he might diſcourſe with his Friends on grave and ſerious Topics; but I would not have ſuch Converſations return too frequently, for fear of their leading him by Degrees into Melancholy, which is nothing elſe but fixing the Thoughts too intently on a ſingle Object. In order to acquire and maintain a green old Age there is nothing ſo requiſite as Chearfulneſs of Mind, which can never be ſecured, if we meditate much on abſtruſe Subjects. I do not ſay that theſe are always to be neglected; but what I ſay is, that this is not the Seaſon of Life in which they ought to be purſued. They require ſuch Vigour, ſuch Attention, and ſuch a Degree of Penetration, as would induce ſo great a Waſte of Spirits as would defeat the Intention of that Remedy which I would recommend, and therefore I lay it down as a ſupplemental Rule, that theſe are to be avoided.

There is, as far as my Foreſight will carry me, but one Objection more, that can be raiſed againſt my Syſtem; and this muſt come from the Quarter of the Politicians, who conceive nothing to be right or worthy of Encouragement, which does not ſquare with their Notions; which are, however, generally ſpeaking, not very agreeable to thoſe of other Men. It would not therefore ſurprize me, if theſe Gentlemen ſhould take it into their Heads to treat this as a whimſical and trifling Performance, becauſe I know that, according to their Syſtem, old Men are ſo many Incumbrances, of which the State ought to be diſcharg'd. It is upon this Principle, I preſume, that ſome *Indian* Nations make great Feaſts in their Famalies when their Chief becomes decrepit, and, when theſe Rejoicings are over, fairly put him out of the Way (*o*). Our Free-thinkers in Politics, therefore, muſt

(*o*) I remember to have read in a late French Writer, that this is practiſed by ſome of the barbarous Nations who live in the Neighbourhood of Hudſon's Bay; and he ſays further, that he was pr-

must necessarily have a bad Opinion (at least while they are young) of such a Proposition as this, which intends no more than prolonging the Lives of those, who, in the Account of our *Machiavelists*, ought to be in their Graves already. What Benefit, say they, can result to Society from maintaining People past their Labours, and who, according to this very Scheme, are declared unfit for Propagation? The Public is only benefited by active and industrious Persons; why then should so much Care be taken to preserve People fit only for a sedentary Life? If the ordinary Laws of Nature can be dispensed with, let it be in Favour of the Publick Weal; why should the extravagant Desire of Life be gratified rather than any other extravagant Desire whatever? Reflections like these, it is evident, must induce these over-wise Persons to treat my Book with Contempt, whatever Opinion they may have of the Arguments contained in it; and therefore it is necessary for me to shew, that these Maxims, how plausible, how refined soever they may appear, are very far from being either just or reasonable; and, which is still of greater Weight in the present Case, are far from being calculated for the Benefit of Mankind in general (*p*).

It

present at one of these Feasts, at the Close of which the Son cut the Throat of his Father. I do not recollect that he bestows any Reflections upon this Passage; but, from the Account he has given us of the Country, I think it no difficult Matter to distinguish the Cause of so inhuman (I should be in the wrong to call it so brutal) a Custom, which I take to be this, that they find it very difficult in that Part of the World to acquire Subsistance, and therefore think themselves under a Kind of Necessity of maintaining only such as are useful. This, I persuade myself, was the Original of so horrid a Practice, which cannot, however, be founded on real Necessity, because these People, who murder their Parents, preserve their Children, though equally helpless.

(*p*) It may be, perhaps, thought I exaggerate a little in supposing that there are People capable of reasoning in such a Manner; but whoever

It is, I think, a Fact so well established, that I need be at no great Pains to prove it, that most of the Mischiefs and Miseries brought upon private Families, and even upon whole Nations, flow from the Warmth of Men's Passions, and from their indulging their irregular Inclinations at the Expence of others, nay and of Society itself. I cannot, therefore, help thinking, that it might be a Mean of lessening these Evils, if we could encrease the Number of those who are free from such irregular and depraved Appetites, and are consequently most capable of conducting with Judgment and Integrity either publick or private Affairs. It is remarkable, that, in all well-governed States, a certain Maturity of Age is required before Men are entrusted, not only with the Management of public Concerns, but of their own. Upon what Reason then is this founded? Is it not because they

whoever considers the Principles of the Spartan Government, and the System of Morals recommended by Lycurgus, will be of another Opinion. Neither are we to imagine, that only severe Politicians are inclined to such a Doctrine; there have been in all Ages some polit. Writers, and refined Wits, who have been inclined to treat old Age, not as a Misfortune only, but as a Crime. For Instance, Cornelius Gallus, one of the Favourites of Augustus, and himself the Patron of Virgil, and of Horace, paints old Age thus:

> Stat dubius tremulusq; senex, semperq; malorum
> Credulus, et stultus quæ facit ipse timet
> Laudat præteritos, præsentes despicit annos:
> Hoc tantum in rectum quod facit ipse putat.

> Trembling and doubtful still the Old we find,
> And much to Credit all ill News inclin'd;
> Foolishly fearful of what e're they do,
> And when 'tis done, they're apprehensive too.
> Pass'd Time's their Praise, the present claim their Spight,
> And only what they do themselves is right.

 are

are thought to want, in the first place, the Lights of Experience; and in the next, to be too much hurried by their Passions? If this be right, and if it not be right, the wisest Men in all Ages have been in the wrong; if this I say be right, why should we fancy Men pass'd their Labours, for being in Possession of those Qualities which are certainly the first Ingredients in the constituting true Wisdom? There will be always People enough in the World full of that Heat, Vigour, and Strength which is requisite for carrying on the active and laborious Parts of Business; but we see plainly, that private Families are brought to Ruin, and, by degrees, great States decay for want of that Moderation, Experience, and Foresight, of which Men, far in Years, and whose Spirits are not oppressed with the Infirmities of Age, are usually possessed. If, therefore, we regard the Ease and Happiness of Mankind, rather than Hurry and Noise, and esteem such a Government as preserves its Subjects in the constant Enjoyment of these Blessings, better than that which employs them at the Expence of their own Ease and Happiness, in disturbing those of their Neighbours, then there can be no Weight in this part of the Objection. As to what respects Generation, it is a very slight and idle Surmise; for if, in Popish Countries, *Monasteries* are found no great Inconvenience, where those that fill them make Vows of Celebacy in the Flower of their Age, certainly for Men, who are turned of Seventy, to forbear getting Children, can never be an Inconvenience to any State.

This is undoubtedly a sufficient Answer, as to the general Reasoning of those I would refute; but with Respect to the Doctrine I have endeavoured to establish, a still clearer and more explicit Answer might be given. For without enquiring whether their Principles be wrong or right, I may easily observe, that nothing I have laid down

down tends to burthen Society with a Race of Dottards. What I propose is quite the contrary. If, on the one hand, I plead for the Extention of human Life, I recommend, on the other, such a Method as must preserve the Faculties in the highest Order. Nor is it to be at all apprehended, that the Number of Men who shall prolong their Lives by this Method, in case it should be ever carried into Practice, will be excessive, or burthensome to Society; the very Nature of it provides against any such Inconvenience, by requiring such Moderation and Self-denial, as will not frequently be found. It is, therefore, an unjust and unfair Imputation upon my Principles, that they tend to burthen the World with useless People, since the utmost to which they can be strained is, that I am for preserving as long as possible, the Lives of such as may be useful. As to the Snbsistance again of such People, it is easy to discern, that this can be but a very triffling Expence, when compared even with what they are able to acquire towards the Increase of the common Stock. So that, considered in this, which is the very worst Light in which the Thing can be put, a true Politician, and one who has a proper Regard for the Interest, and, at the same Time, a just Respect for the Rights of Mankind, will be far from thinking that I have offered any Thing which can be prejudicial to a well-ordered Society, but have rather provided a very good Method for securing a constant Supply of such Counsellors, as may preserve it in the best Order possible.

On this Occasion, I beg Leave to cite a Passage which *Tully* hath put into the Mouth of the elder *Cato* (*q*), that deserves as much Attention from its Solidity, and good Sense, as it does Praise for the Beauty and Accuracy of Stile in which it is delivered.. *Cato* is

(*q*) Cicero de Senectute, c. ii.

there

there answering the very Objection, which I have been treating. " If, *says he*, Petulance or Lust be Vices more " frequent among young Men than old, yet all young " Men are not infected with them, but such 'only as " want proper Talents; so it is with that Sort of Dis- " temper which you call Dotage, it is indeed the Dis- " ease of old Men, but however all old Men are not " infected with it. *Appius* was for some Years quite " dark, and yet he managed a Family of four Sons " grown up, and five Daughters, with Abundance of " of Relations and Clients, who depended upon him. " He kept his Mind always in Order, and though his " Vigour decayed, yet his Senses never failed him. " He preserved to the last Moment his Character, and " his Authority: Every Body looked up towards him " as became their Station; his Slaves feared, his Chil- " dren revered, and all who were about him loved him. " In a Word, he kept up the old Discipline, and did " honour to the *Roman* Name, by preserving the Man- " ners of his Family untainted. So that it is plain, old " Age may maintain a graceful Superiority, if it be jea- " lous of its Prerogative; if on all Occasions it main- " tains its Right, if it never sneaks and gives way, " but keeps up a manly Spirit to the last. For as I ap- " prove some Qualities of Age in a young Man, so a " youthful Spirit is very commendable in Men of Years, " for while they preserve this, though the Body may " feel the Effects of Age, yet the Mind stands out of its " Reach. At this very Instant I am employed in " writing the *Seventh* Book of my *Antiquities*, and am " actually making large Collections from such old Re- " cords as may serve my Purpose. I likewise review, " and sometimes touch a-fresh, the Orations I have " formerly made in the capital Causes, wherein I " have been concerned: I still keep up my Stock of

" Know-

" Knowledge in the Augurial, Pontifical, and Civil Law,
" and have Time enough to read a great deal of *Greek*
" besides. I constantly use the *Pythagorean* Method
" for the Exercise of my Memory, and every Evening
" run over in my Mind whatever I have said, heard or
" done that Day. These are the Exercises of the Under-
" standing, and in these, as in a Chariot, the Soul takes
" the Air; while I am capable of these, I don't give my-
" self much concern about bodily Decays, I am always
" at the Command of my Friends attend the Service of
" the House frequently, and distinguish myself in De-
" bates, wherein a Man compasses more by Strength of
" his Faculties, than he can do elsewhere by Force of
" Arms. But should it ever prove my Misfortune to be
" confined to my Bed, and be thereby rendered incap-
" able of going through these Employments, yet the very
" Thoughts of what I would do, if I were able, would
" console me. But Thanks be to Heaven, I have no Rea-
" son to apprehend any such Thing, I have been a bet-
" ter Husband of my Time than so, for let a Man be
" but constantly exercised in Labours like these, and he
" will not so soon find the Breaches of Age. Years will
" steal upon him insensibly, he will grow old by degrees,
" and without feeling it; nay, when he comes to break
" at last, the House will crumble gently, and fall down
" so slowly, as not to give him any great Pain". This is a very fine Picture, and contains a more finished Apology for that State of Life which I am endeavouring to extend, than my Abilities would suffer me to draw; but the very producing it serves my Purpose better than if I had wrote it. If I follow the Sentiments of *Cicero*, and the Example of *Cato* the Elder, who shall question either my Sense, or my Conduct?

It ought to be further considered, that, for perfecting many of the Sciences, a longer Life is requisite than

Men

Men usually enjoy; or to speak with greater Propriety, the free Excercise of their Faculties to a more advanced Age. If we examine all the Improvements that have been made in true Science, we shall find, that they have proceeded from Men, who have exercised their Thoughts in such Kind of Studies for a long Course of Years. The last Books of *Aristotle* are esteemed the most perfect, so are those of *Seneca*, which he wrote in an advanced Age; and we may say the same Thing with respect to modern Philosophers; such as *Gassendi*, *Bacon*, and *Newton*. A serene old Age is therefore of the highest Consequence in this respect, since it would contribute to furnish the World with new and useful Lights, and prevent the Expectations they conceive from the early Productions of great Men, from being frustrated, as they frequently are, by their premature Deaths. I must likewise observe, that mechanical Inventions require much Time to perfect them, and that very profitable Discoveries, and very useful Manufactures, have been lost by the Deaths of those who first cultivated them, of which many Instances might be given. We may likewise remark, that settling any new Plantation, reforming a Society, or, in short, reducing any People who have been long under an ill Form of Government, or in a great measure without any, requires Length of Days. *Lewis* XIV. changed entirely the Face of Things in *France* during his Reign, which was principally owing to the Length of it, as it gave him an Opportunity of seeing most of his Schemes brought to bear; whereas, the unexpected Death of the Great Czar *Peter* caused many of his Projects to be buried in Oblivion, and must have overturned the whole of his glorious Design for reforming his Subjects, and raising the Credit of his Crown, with the rest of the *European* Powers; if, which was scarce to be expected, his Successors had not, generally speaking,

ſpeaking, perſiſted in the Purſuit of his Plan. We may therefore eaſily diſcern, that ſuch an Extention of Life, as this Treatiſe propoſes, would be ſo far from contributing to burthen the World with an uſeleſs Race of old Men, that it would really furniſh it with ſuch People, as are moſt wanted for the Improvement of Knowledge, the perfecting mechanical Diſcoveries, and contributing, in other Reſpects, to the Welfare of Mankind.

Upon the whole, thererefore, I think I may very juſtly conclude, that by examining this ancient Inſcription, I have not only exerciſed my Thoughts in a Manner that may contribute to the Amuſement of the Learned; but that I have hinted many Things which may be of publick Utility. In this Reſpect, indeed, I think, I have made the proper Uſe of the Inſcription; for certainly it is much better to inform ourſelves as to Things than Words, and the World would be much more indebted to the Labours of learned Men, if they would pay that Regard to this Maxim which it deſerves. What Uſe would it be of to Mankind, ſuppoſing it poſſible for me to fix the Reign of the *Roman* Emperor, under which *Hermippus* flouriſhed? Or what Thanks would my Readers owe me, if I had endeavoured to diſcuſs, whether he lived to a hundred and fifty-five, or a hundred and fifteen only? Have I not choſen the better Part, in examining what may ſtill be of ſome Uſe, *viz.* by what Method he arrived at ſo great an Age, and how far it is practicable for us to follow his Method. I think I may go ſtill farther, and affirm, that I have made it at leaſt extremely probable, that the *Anhelitus Puellarum* is in ſome meaſure the Breath of Life; in order to which, I hope, I have effectually deſtroyed ſome Prejudices that affected the Minds even of People of good Senſe, as to the ſettled Term of human Life, and the Impoſſibility of prolonging it by Art. I

have likewise, in the Course of this Dissertation, collected the Sentiments of several great Men, who think, or at least seem to me to think in the same Way that I do, and have thereby given an Opportunity, to the curious and inquisitive Reader, of searching more strictly into their Opinions, in order to do them Justice, in case, after mature Consideration, he thinks that I have failed in so doing.

If this should contribute little to the Elucidation of the present Point, yet it might prove the Means of bringing many Things of Consequence to Light. We have made it evident, by our Citations from old Books, that many of the Discoveries, for which the Moderns are famous, were actually known to the Learned in former Times; whence we may probably conjecture, that some other Things were known to them, with which we are not acquainted, and the rather, because there is scarce any Country where antient Monuments are to be found, but we may discern in them Marks of Skill and Capacity that transcend the Power of modern Workmen, and though these may not be agreeable to the present Taste, which seems to be a handsome Expression for the reigning Humour of Mankind, that changes too often to deserve the Name of a Rule, yet they still manifest great Quickness of Invention, and the Possession of many Arts that are now lost. It is some Credit to Antiquity, that the oldest building in the World, which is the Temple of *Theseus* at *Athens*, is by far the finest; and in Literature again, *Homer* and *Hippocrates* plainly prove, that in Point of Genius, or of Industry, the first Ages are yet unrival'd. There are several Roads which lead to true Wisdom, we may sometimes reach it by going backwards, as well as forwards, and profit as much by detecting the Prejudices of the Moderns, as by refuting the Errors of Antiquity. It is a just Observation of the great

Lord

Lord *Verulam*, that much Learning frees us from those Miſtakes into which we are plunged by having only a little. When firſt the Moderns began to examine the Writings of *Herodotus* and *Pliny*, they found nothing but Abſurdities and Improbabilities; but now, that we are better acquainted with experimental Philoſophy, we begin to have a better Opinion of theſe Authors, and are obliged to confeſs, that, in ſome Caſes, Sagacity may ſupply Experience. I am, however, ready to admit, that in ſome Branches of Science, we may have outdone the Antients very much; but what of that, we are ſtill far ſhort of Perfection. Our very Diſcoveries prove it; for Example, we diſcern the Effects of Gravity, we ſee the whole Mechaniſm of the Univerſe depend upon it; but the Cauſe has been hither to inexplicable. We are well acquainted with the many Properties of the Needle, which were Secrets to former Times, but the Cauſe of its Variation remains a Secret to us. We have indeed made ſome bold Gueſſes at both, and it is not impoſſible, that Poſterity may be able to demonſtrate our Conjectures; as it is on the other hand likewiſe poſſible, that they may prove them to be only idle Conjectures. If we would avoid being deceived, we muſt decline Bigottry of all Sorts, we muſt not carry our Veneration for the Antients too far, and, at the ſame Time, we ought not to be afraid of uſing a juſt Freedom with the Moderns; ſince it is not our Buſineſs to admire others, but to inſtruct ourſelves.

With the ſame View of coming at Truth, by ſetting the Subject, of which I treat, in different Lights, I have ſtated the Opinions of others fairly, and have reaſoned upon them as freely as I deſire to ſee my own Syſtem treated. I have given the Reader the Sentiments of Aſtrologers, and of Hermetic Philoſophers on this Inſcription, and have left it to him to decide, whe-

ther they are more in the Right than I, or whether we may not all be miſtaken, and this Inſcription have at laſt ſome other Secret, and yet more probable Senſe than any of us have reached. To encourage an exact Diſcuſſion of this, I have often inculcated the Uſefulneſs of ſuch an Enquiry, and I think, have fully proved without the Poſſibility of a Reply, that as it is very practicable to extend the Thread of Life beyond that Length to which it uſually reaches, ſo this will be a real Benefit and not an idle or triffling Diſcovery. Theſe are the principal Points that I have laboured, and to avoid that Heavineſs and Dryneſs which is commonly complained of in Diſcourſes of this Kind, I have frequently made Excurſions ſo rthe Entertainment of myſelf and my Readers, and have inſerted Abundance of curious Paſſages from ſcarce and valuable Books, that, I hope, will make full amends for the Trouble of peruſing this Treatiſe, even to ſuch as may remain unconvinced of the Truth or Practicability of my Syſtem. At leaſt, I can ſay this for my Book, and for myſelf, that nothing has been omitted within the Reach of my Power, which might render it at once both profitable and pleaſant; and therefore, I hope, that if any one ſhall take the Trouble of criticiſing it, he will at leaſt treat it with that Candour and good Manners which I have uſed through the whole, and not with that ſurly and pedantic Peeviſhneſs, which is too often viſible in the Works of minor Critics, who value themſelves much more on expoſing the Faults of other Men, than on manifeſting any valuable Qualities in themſelves, and are better pleaſed to deſtroy an Edifice erected by an other, than to acquire a juſt Reputation, by raiſing a better Structure of their own.

There is one Thing more I muſt remark, and it is this, that my Syſtem is entirely on the right Side. I have

have not undertaken to demonſtrate, as many have done, a Paradox in the Teeth of common Senſe, and the common Intereſt of the human Species, of which the famous Encomium on Folly, and the Panygerick on Drunkenneſs, are glaring Inſtances; but what I have laid down in this Diſcourſe is with a View to the public Utility, and from a Deſire of doing good; if therefore, upon throughly ſifting this Diſpute, the Matter ſhould come at laſt to be in Equilibrio, I hope the Turn of the Scale will be allowed me; for ſurely, if Senſe be preferable to Dotage, Eaſe to Pain, or Life to Death, I have a fair Title to this Favour. I would not be underſtood to intereſt, by this Means, the Inclinations or Prejudices of my Readers, on my Side, for that might prove detrimental to Truth; but I introduce this Remark, to ſecure me againſt the Effects of a petulant Humour, which reigns but too much in the World, of diſliking whatever has the Appearance of Novelty, and ſuppoſing that there is ſomething equally juſt and wiſe in maintaining old Opinions againſt new, and in running down any Syſtem upon its firſt Appearance. Againſt this unequitable Prepoſſeſſion, in Favours of antique Notions, I ſet up this Claim to the good Will of Mankind, founded on the Benefits reſulting from my Syſtem to the human Species, either conſidered as Individuals or in Society. It was upon the ſame Principle, that the late Dr. *Harvey* eſtabliſhed his Doctrine of the Circulation of the Blood, which, he juſtly obſerved, would exempt the Art of Phyſic from many Reproaches, and enable us to give a clearer and more rational Account of the animal Oeconomy. On this Baſis too, ſtands the Philoſophy of Sir *Iſaac Newton*, which is perhaps the nobleſt Effort of the human Underſtanding. I do not mean by this to compare my Invention with theirs, or myſelf to either of thoſe great Men. All I aim at is

is to shew, that the greatest Men have had need of Indulgence, when they propounded new Systems; whence I infer, that such a Desire cannot be thought either unjust or unreasonable in the least, as I readily own myself to be.

Here then let me rest this Affair, and after taking so much Pains to render this Work not altogether unworthy the View of the Public, or the Eye of equal and impartial Judges, I resign it freely to their Consideration, and depend upon their Candour and Humanity for the kind Acceptance of my Labours.

FINIS.